

FERDINAND LASSALLE
AND
HELENE VON DÖNNIGES

A Modern Tragedy

BY
ELIZABETH E. EVANS



LONDON
SWAN SONNENSCHN & CO., LIM.
PATERNOSTER SQUARE
1897

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⇨* AND *⇨

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32
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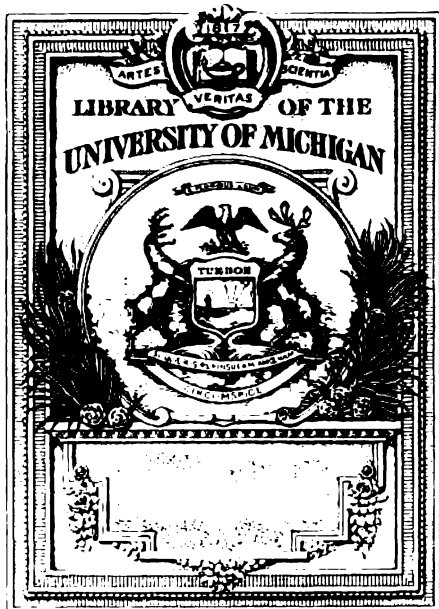
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“ Wer nie sein Brod mit Thränen ass,
Wer nie die kummervollen Nächte
Auf seinem Bette weinend sass,
Der kennt Euch nicht, Ihr himmlische Mächte.

“ Ihr führt ins Leben uns hinein,
Ihr lass't den Armen schuldig werden,
Dann überlasst Ihr ihn der Pein ;
Denn alle Schuld rächt sich auf Erden.”—GOETHE.

“ Who ne'er in sorrow ate his bread,
Who ne'er through lonely midnight hours
Weeping hath sat upon his bed,
He knows You not, Ye heavenly Powers !

“ You place us in temptation's path,
You let us sink in guilt and fear,
Then leave us to avenging wrath ;
For every sin is punished here.”

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PREFACE

THE love story of Ferdinand Lassalle and Helene von Dönniges constitutes a tragedy which is worthy of being made known to the whole world, on account of its intensely interesting details, and also because of the moral lessons which it enforces and illustrates.

Most of the actors in that exciting drama have passed off the stage for ever: the few who remain have retired from public view, or are occupied with plans and interests of less restricted limits; but the effects of that strange episode are still apparent, both in private life and in the political movements of the age.

In my narration I have adhered strictly to the accounts published by various persons connected with the affair; being myself a stranger, personally, to all parties, and having no interest, excepting that of a historical student, in the matter, and no responsibility concerning the record of what other people have said and done.

The principal sources of my information are the following books :

Enthüllungen über das tragische Lebensende Ferdinand Lassalles. Von Bernhard Becker. Schleiz : Hugo Heyn. 1868.

Ein Liebes-Episode aus dem Leben Ferdinand Lassalle's. Leipzig : F. A. Brockhaus. 1878.

Lassalles Liebe und Tod. N. N. N. Leipzig : B. Köhler's Buchhandlung.

Meine Beziehungen zu Ferdinand Lassalle. Von Helene von Racowitza. (geb. v. Dönniges). Breslau und Leipzig : S. Schottlaender. 1879.

Lassalles Tod. Von A. Kutschbach. Chemnitz : E. Schmeitzner. 1880.

Ein Münchener Kind in der Fremde. (Helene von Racowitza). Von Willy Westen. München : Georg Pollner. 1882.

Lassalles Leiden. Berlin : Paul Hennig. 1887.

Ferdinand Lassalle as a Social Reformer. By Edward Bernstein. London : Swan Sonnenschein and Co. New York : Scribner's. 1893.

Die wahren Ursachen von Tode Ferdinand Lassalles. Von *. *. Leipzig : Karl Fr. Pfau. 1895

The author assumes that Lassalle expected and wished to be killed in the duel, as the best way of putting an end to his unsuccessful political career—a theory which is not supported by the facts, and which is apparently adopted as a basis for an attack upon the principles of Socialism in general.

Also the story is told, in a fanciful way, and under fictitious names, by George Meredith, in a novel entitled, *The Tragic Comedians*.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. FERDINAND LASSALLE . . .	11
II. HELENE VON DÖNNIGES . . .	21
III. LASSALLE AND HELENE . . .	36
IV. THE CATASTROPHE . . .	46
V. AFTERWARDS . . .	108

FERDINAND LASSALLE

AND

HELENE VON DÖNNIGES

I.

FERDINAND LASSALLE

FERDINAND LASSALLE was born April 11th, 1825, in Breslau, Prussia, of Jewish parents. He was brought up as a Jew, and, nominally, always adhered to his religion. His father was a merchant, and wished his son to follow the same calling; but the boy showed no aptitude for business, and was therefore allowed to go to the university, where he studied earnestly, especially philology and philosophy, although without any view to a profession as a means of support.

After finishing his studies, he settled at Düsseldorf, from whence he went to Paris, where he became intimate with Heine. He was then only nineteen years old, a model of manly beauty, and full of the energy of ambitious youth. Heine said of him, that he was born to die like a gladiator, with a smile on his lips; and in view of his subsequent career, so full of conflict and danger, so

terrible in its untimely end, Heine's admiring comparison seems like a prophecy of the youth's impending fate.

On his return to Düsseldorf, he became acquainted with Countess Hatzfeld, and enlisted himself as her champion in her matrimonial difficulties, which had then reached a crisis. Count Hatzfeld was a nobleman of enormous wealth, whose principal place of residence was at an ancestral castle, near Düsseldorf.

He was dissolute in his habits, and insulted his wife by living openly with a favourite mistress—Baroness von Meyerdorf. The Countess left him and resided with her children in Düsseldorf. She was of high rank by birth, and, as a girl, was noted for her Madonna-like beauty and her modest behaviour. After her marriage she became free in her opinions and conduct (what the Germans call "emancipated"), and interested herself deeply in the projects of the revolutionary party, then preparing for the outburst of "'48." She was thirty-eight years old, just double the age of Lassalle, when the two met at Düsseldorf, and began the friendship which was to play so great a part in the young man's history.

The Countess wanted to be divorced from her husband, and to be granted a suitable portion of his large fortune for her own support, and for the maintenance and education of their two children.

To obtain the fulfilment of this reasonable request, Lassalle devoted his best energies, and was triumphant after a delay of nine years. The trial was complicated by the episode known as the "*Casseten-Prozess*."

The mistress of Count Hatzfeld was supposed to have in her possession certain papers belonging to the Countess, and extremely necessary to the prosecuting party. Baroness von Meyerdorf was said to keep the papers in a jewel-

case, which she carried with her wherever she went; and once, being on a journey, she was followed and watched by two men interested in Lassalle's success, and the box was stolen from her apartment at the hotel where she stopped.

The papers were not in the box, however, and the jewels were restored undisturbed; but the affair was brought to trial, and the principal offender suffered a long imprisonment; while Lassalle, who had nothing to do with the theft, was considered as the instigator, and judged accordingly at the bar of public opinion.

In the midst of the Hatzfeld lawsuit, the revolution of '48 broke out, and Lassalle soon became prominent as a leader of the Social-Democratic party. It was not long before he came into conflict with the authorities. He was accused of having incited the people to rebellion; but was cleared of the charge after a powerful speech, wherein he declared, that in such troublous times citizens had a right to carry arms in self-defence. But he was finally found guilty of having attacked the Government officers in Düsseldorf, and was imprisoned for six months—from November, '48 to May, '49.

While in prison he directed the management of the Hatzfeld trial, and on his release the intricate details of that remarkable suit kept him busy until the case was finally settled according to his desire; the Countess was free and rich, and he himself was famous. But although he had won a signal triumph as an eloquent and untiring advocate, his connection with the Hatzfeld affair was a life-long injury to his reputation, and the ultimate cause of final disaster.

Pending the decision he lived with the Countess in her house, and when he removed from Düsseldorf to Berlin

the Countess went there too; and although she did not live in his house, her apartment was close by, and their relations continued as intimate as before.

The lawsuit ended in 1853, and Lassalle's activity found other and more generally useful fields of labour. In 1858 he published his drama, *Franz von Sickingen*; in 1859, *Die Philosophie Heraklites des Dunklen*; in 1861, *Ein System der erworbenen Rechte*.

He wrote besides a great number of pamphlets and newspaper articles, and lectured frequently before liberal audiences and assemblies of working-men.

After his removal to Berlin he formed a close friendship with Humboldt and Boeckh, and his acquaintance was cultivated by many of the most distinguished and influential residents of that intellectual capital. Bismarck was greatly interested in Lassalle, and sought frequent opportunities of discussing with him the political questions which they regarded from entirely different standpoints. Bismarck was aware that his conferences with the leader of the Socialist party were exposing himself to remark and suspicion; nevertheless he did not hesitate to declare in a speech in Parliament that Lassalle was one of the most gifted and most interesting persons he had ever met; that he often conversed with him for hours at a time, and was always sorry when the end came, as he found it very instructive to talk with such a man.

He declared that Lassalle was by no means a Republican; on the contrary, he was at heart a Monarchist: he was a very ambitious man, and his great aim was the establishment of the German Empire—whether with the dynasty Hohenzollern, or the dynasty Lassalle, might be a doubtful point; but, at any rate, his views were Monarchical.

Bismarck's description of Lassalle is only another proof of his extreme acuteness in reading character, and the justice of his conclusions received full support from Lassalle's own words, spoken in one of his most unguarded hours, at a later period of his career.

Indeed, it is hard to define this brilliant agitator's true position in politics, because he was not always logical in his words, nor consistent in his deeds.

Yet, with all his weaknesses and inconsistencies, there is no doubt that he was sincere in his devotion to liberal ideas, and really had the cause of the labouring class at heart.

The *Allgemeine Deutsche Arbeiter Verein*, which he founded, remains his best monument, a standing protest against the encroachments of arbitrary power and the tyranny of monetary capital. His historical mission consisted in taking a step in advance towards Socialism. The ideas which he promulgated were in the main the same ideas which were common to the Socialist party in '48, but which had been partly forgotten by the world in general, through the later prevalence of reactionary principles. And he enforced his opinions with the ardour of youth and the zeal of an exceptionally sanguine temperament. Heine called him *the Messiah of the nineteenth century*, and he doubtless believed himself capable of inaugurating a new political dispensation which should save the world from the rapidly accumulating consequences of past ignorance and wickedness. His remarkable beauty of face and form, his persuasive eloquence, his manly courage and confidence, all these purely personal advantages lent new strength to the doctrines he taught, and gained new adherents to the plans he proposed. His influence was continually on the increase until the beginning

of that series of fatal incidents which in a few days put an end to his work and his career.

It is needless to say that while he was idolized by his own party he was hated by his opponents in a degree proportionate to their fears of his success.

As the war he waged was chiefly against Capital as opposed to Labour, his bitterest enemies were the great Capitalists; that is, the wealthy middle-class, to which he himself really belonged.

And these powerful members of society spared no pains to lessen the great agitator's influence by attacks and insinuations which were calculated to arouse suspicion in the working-classes, and lead them to doubt the wisdom of following a leader whose private life was in direct contradiction to his professed democracy.

Unfortunately Lassalle laid himself open to such charges, and the inference seemed more logical than it really was. In Berlin he lived rather like a pleasure-loving aristocrat than like an apostle of equality; his luxuriously-furnished house in the most fashionable quarter of the city was the scene of frequent and splendid entertainment; the society which he preferred was largely composed of persons indifferent or inimical to the ideas which were supposed to dominate his actions; and, worst of all, his reputation for unlawful gallantry was widespread and fully deserved. His peculiar relations with Countess Hatzfeld were the constant theme of reproach among his enemies, and there is no doubt that the intimacy exerted a baleful influence upon Lassalle's own moral nature, besides being a source of injury to him in the opinion of the general public.

One charge, however, in relation to this subject was a slander. He was accused of carrying on his costly

establishment at the Countess' expense; the truth being that when the famous lawsuit was ended, and his victorious client desired to recompense her valiant defender, he consented to accept of a sum which seemed to fairly represent the opportunities that he had sacrificed in the nine years devoted almost exclusively to her affairs. Besides the fortune thus acquired, he received money from his father, a wealthy merchant in Breslau; so that his easy circumstances can be accounted for, without resorting to such odious suggestions as were promulgated for obvious purposes by his political enemies.

Lassalle possessed the faults, as well as the virtues, of a strong character, together with weaknesses which appertain to feebler natures. He was exceedingly obstinate and dictatorial, unable to bear the slightest contradiction from his co-workers, or to see any glimpse of reason in the arguments of his opponents. He was very vain, and, therefore, open to flattery of the grossest kind; he was disposed to curry favour with influential persons in office and in high places, in order to obtain their recognition of his plans and purposes, and, finally, he was strongly influenced by women. But, on the other hand, he possessed many admirable characteristics; he had proved himself bold and tireless in the people's cause; and even if personal motives and a false estimate of the consequences of his agitation influenced his conduct, still, his coming forward as he did was brave and noble; and his party should hold his worthy service in grateful remembrance.

Besides, it must not be forgotten that Lassalle was young. He was a mere boy when he first took part in revolutionary politics; he was only thirty-nine when he

died. If he had lived his disposition might have been pruned of its exuberance, and the chastened energy of mature years would have been guided by judgment ripe and wise. But the traits which were in opposition to his character as a reformer brought him to his early fall. He died from his own fault; he was ruined through his contradictory qualities and his ungoverned passions; his tragical end was the necessary result of his natural disposition and his habitual conduct.

Lassalle never married. He could not be satisfied with anything less than an absorbing love, and what he found did not satisfy him. Until he was thirty-five years old he had never paid court to any woman with the intention of marrying her. He had had numerous adventures with women, married and unmarried; but all these persons understood from the beginning that marriage was not in his thoughts.

In the fall of 1860, at Aix les Bains, he met a young Russian lady, Sophie —, who first awoke in him the desire to marry. She was with her father, an invalid, who, like Lassalle, had been sent to Aix for the benefit of the waters. When their carriage drove up to the hotel, Lassalle was just coming out of the door, and he stopped a moment to glance at the new arrival. The Russian and his daughter were struck by his commanding presence, and he, too, was apparently favourably impressed; for he took pains to make their acquaintance, and while he talked politics with the father, he used every effort to ingratiate himself with the daughter. For a wonder her heart remained untouched. Lassalle, whose success with women was proverbial, failed this time to win the affection

he coveted. Whether it was her youth—she was only nineteen, while Lassalle was thirty-six—or whether her fancy was preoccupied, or whether her nature was too widely different from his to allow of a full appreciation of his brilliant qualities, remains a mystery. The probability is that Lassalle, confident of success, laid siege to her affections in a manner which repelled her. It may be that she doubted the earnestness of a lover who could turn so readily from the gravest discussion to the playfulness of gallantry; or, perhaps, she was overawed by the splendour of his talents and the variety of his acquirements. She acknowledged that she was profoundly impressed by his personality; his conversations with her father interested her deeply, and she was proud of his preference for herself; but he demanded in his fiery way her entire affection, and that she could not give him. The acquaintance begun at Aix was continued in Dresden, whither he followed them, and in Berlin, where they visited him; but it was all in vain: the Russian girl promised him her lasting friendship, but refused him her love.

It is probable that the presence of Countess Hatzfeld in Lassalle's house, and the stories which the strangers undoubtedly heard about the relations between the two, had some influence upon the final decision. The young lady seemed to be conscious of the Countess' sympathy in her trouble, and of her approval of the resolve to reject the brilliant offer; and it is certain that the Countess preferred that Lassalle should remain single, and did all in her power to prevent him from marrying, whenever there seemed to be any danger of the event taking place.

The affair ended by the return of the Russians to their native land; but a friendly correspondence, becoming more infrequent as time went on, was kept up between Lassalle

and the young lady until the end of 1863. In reading her story one feels all the time that they were not suited to each other, and that the emotion then awakened in Lassalle's heart was slight compared with the intense attraction he was afterwards to experience towards another woman.

He appears to have been charmed by the glimpse of peaceful home-life which was offered to his inspection through the tender relation subsisting between the invalid father and the devoted daughter. She was evidently a refined and delicate-minded girl, sensible, modest, and discreet—a type of womanhood which, thus far, had come but seldom in Lassalle's way. Then, too, his failure to win her regard had astonished and piqued him, and he was determined to conquer that incomprehensible repugnance to his suit.

After he had become convinced that pursuit was vain, his interest in the young lady subsided; but his determination to marry still remained.

It was only a little more than a year after he bade farewell to Sophie — that he first met Helene von Dönniges, and felt that he had found his mate at last.

HELENE VON DÖNNIGES

HELENE VON DÖNNIGES was the daughter of a distinguished North German, who had been a teacher of the Bavarian Crown Prince Maximilian at Berlin; and when the Prince married Princess Marie of Prussia and went back to Bavaria, Herr von Dönniges was called to Munich as a friend and adviser of his former pupil. On the accession of Maximilian to the throne, Von Dönniges and his young wife became important members of the Court circle. Frau von Dönniges was treated by the Queen as an intimate friend, and her husband influenced the young King to call to Munich many noted men whose names and works have made that city famous as a literary and artistic centre. Among the most celebrated of these chosen characters were Liebig, Riehl, Heyse, Geibel, Dingelstedt, Kaulbach, Schwind, Lingg, Bodenstedt, and Dahn.

Occupied with this intellectual circle, and with the duties of Court life, the Von Dönniges couple had little time to pay attention to the development of their offspring, who were left almost entirely to the care of nurses and governesses.

Helene, the only one of the children with whom this story has to do, being remarkably forward for her years, was allowed by her mother to join the society of the

drawing-room when only twelve years old, and was betrothed the same year to a man she had never seen, an Italian, forty-two years old, commander of the fortress of Alessandria, whose acquaintance her mother had made during a journey in Sardinia.

Being greatly pleased with the foreign officer, Frau von Dönniges promised him her eldest daughter as his wife; and Herr von Dönniges gave his tacit consent, although he took no active part in the arrangement. Helene was too young to realize her position, and she liked very well the flattering attentions bestowed upon her as a "bride"; but when the bridegroom appeared, she found him not at all to her taste, and absolutely refused to have anything more to do with him. Her mother was exceedingly angry; but her father did not interfere, and her grandmother upheld the girl's decision, and carried her away to Berlin, in order to put an end to the unpleasant affair.

Helene spent some time in Berlin, where she received much attention from the large number of friends and acquaintances who frequented her grandmother's house.

She took no interest in girls of her own age, but formed an intimacy with two young married ladies, whose influence only served to develop still more strongly her already precocious susceptibility.

During this visit she met, for the first time, the young Boyar, Yanko, Fürst Gehen Racowitza, who fell in love with her at once, and whom she treated with a mixture of confidence and coquetry, which bound him to her with an irresistible fascination.

He was a Wallachian Prince, small and dark, with thick curly hair and glittering black eyes. Helene called him her *Moorish page*, and he was obedient to her every whim.

After a while Helene returned to her family, and went with them to Nice, where several years were spent in gaiety and wild adventure, the worst possible school of life for such a disposition as Helene possessed. In that period of unwholesome excitement she lost, according to her own remorseful confession, the true standard of morality—the power of judging between right and wrong—and was never able to find it again. Her consciousness of this loss is the best proof of the original probity of her character.

While in Nice she had a love affair with a Russian naval officer; but it did not last long, and her numerous flirtations were at last put an end to by her good grandmother, who carried her back to Berlin, in the hope of saving her before her reputation should be seriously endangered.

She went willingly; for she was beginning to tire of gaiety, and her better nature responded to the wise counsels of the relative whom she preferred to all the rest of the family. Her father had always neglected her; her mother regarded her chiefly as an ornament to the drawing-room; only one of her sisters was near her own age, and her brothers were away at school.

She loved her grandmother, and she also longed for the opportunities of mental culture which were offered so abundantly in Berlin.

It was in the winter of 1861 that Helene returned to Germany. She was then eighteen years old, but her early physical development and her long-continued social experience made her appear more mature than she really was. In Berlin she devoted herself mainly to intellectual pursuits—visited picture galleries and studios, attended lectures and concerts, and the theatre. She had a great desire to go upon the stage, and took pains to become

acquainted with actors and actresses and prominent artistes of all kinds. She seldom went to balls; but did not entirely renounce the gaieties in which she had formerly taken so much pleasure.

Yanko von Racowitza resumed his devoted service, and she treated him as an intimate friend.

At a private ball, in 1862, Helene first heard of Lassalle. She was talking with a gentleman in a manner more free than is usually expected of a German lady, when he exclaimed :

“You know Lassalle?”

“No,” she answered; “who is he?”

The gentleman (Baron Korff, Meyerbeer's son-in-law, a gay, wild, but highly-educated and talented young man) dropped the subject; but soon afterwards some remark of Helene's again awakened his curiosity, and he cried :

“Surely you know Lassalle? Only a woman who knows him and shares his opinions can speak like that!”

Helene again denied all knowledge of the person mentioned, and Baron Korff replied :

“Then I pity you both every hour that you remain apart, for you were made for each other!”

Helene's curiosity was aroused for the moment, but she soon forgot the incident in the excitement of dancing.

A short time afterwards, at a dinner-party, Dr. Karl Oldenberg, one of the most intellectual members of Berlin society, said to her :

“You are the only woman I ever met who seems fitted to be Lassalle's wife!”

Struck by the coincidence between this exclamation and Baron Korff's remarks, she made enquiries, and learned much about Lassalle's life, something also concerning his

relations with Countess Hatzfeld, who was described to her as an old, withered, painted woman, sixty years old, smoking cigars; but undeniably intellectual, and understanding law like a jurist. On returning home, Helene asked her grandmother whether she had ever heard of Lassalle, and received for answer that he was a dreadful demagogue, "a person whom it would not do to know." Then she asked Yanko, who, to gratify her, made investigations, and brought her a long story about the casket scandal and Lassalle's connection with the Countess.

Soon afterwards Lassalle and Helene met. It was at the house of lawyer Hirsemenzel, whose wife knew of Helene's desire to become acquainted with the man of whom she had heard so much. He was not in the drawing-room when she entered, but several other guests were present, and when the lady of the house went to summon her husband and his companions from the library, Helene hid herself on a low seat behind the high-backed sofa, from whence she could observe the company without being herself seen. The host soon appeared, with two other men, one a small, dark, ugly Jew, who she supposed must be Lassalle, the other a tall, slender, remarkably handsome man, with a head like the Roman Cæsar, and eyes which shone with wonderful lustre as he continued the interrupted conversation. She thought to herself, "What a pity that he is not the one!" And then she listened to the fascinating speech of the brilliant stranger, who had seated himself upon the sofa behind which she was hidden.

At last he uttered some sentiment which did not agree with her views, and, rolling forward her stool to his side, she sprang up, exclaiming, "No; that is not my opinion!" He rose also, and for a moment they stood looking at

each other: a moment which decided the fate of both. Then they sat down, and he said laughingly, all the while holding her with his magnetic gaze: "No? So! A denial is the first utterance which I hear from this young creature! And this is how you look! This is you! Yes, yes, it is as I thought, and it is all right!"

Helene began to feel embarrassed, and she looked around for the hostess to come and perform the introduction according to the accepted rules of society; but Lassalle laid his hand on her arm, and said quietly:

"What is the use? We know each other already. You know who I am; and you are 'Brünhilde,' 'Adrienne Cardoville,' the 'fox' Korff has told me about—in one word, Helene!"

This address charmed her; she laughed in reply, and yielded herself to the delight of an entirely sympathetic influence. When supper was announced they continued together, and talked exclusively with each other until four o'clock in the morning, when the company broke up.

From time to time, for many years afterwards, Helene met persons whom she supposed she had never seen before, and who said to her: "I was present on that remarkable occasion when you and Lassalle first met each other, and I have never forgotten the impression which you both together made upon my mind."

Neither did they ever forget that interview. Both felt perfectly happy; she, light and free, as though everybody and everything else in the world were indifferent to her, and only they two were of importance; he, as though something heretofore lacking to his contentment and his energy were supplied, and he were now ready to be and do all that

he desired. No doubt this was a true instinct; they did suit each other, and if they could have come together they might have enjoyed a rare happiness, and accomplished a good work for the world. It gives one a heartache to read that romance of a spring night, and then think of what happened afterwards!

When the guests took leave, Lassalle called Helene away from her companions, and they started on in advance of the others. He carried her in his arms down the outside steps, and they walked away together. Her chaperon, a lady very strict in principles and manners, said of this conduct afterwards:

"It was rather bold and unusual; but if he had taken you by the hand and walked off with you altogether, I should not have thought it strange; you seemed to belong to each other so entirely!"

Their way led through a portion of the *Thiergarten*. It was a mild night in springtime, and the moon was shining.

Ah! we can all imagine that delightful ramble, and the feelings of the two enchanted wanderers!

Lassalle's conversation implied from the beginning that they belonged to each other, and must eventually be united; and when they parted he asked her when they were to meet again, and when he should call upon her grandmother to arrange matters.

These practical questions brought Helene down from the clouds, and she hesitatingly begged him to have patience, as it would not do for him to attempt to visit her yet.

He warned her half-laughingly that they were their own mutual destiny, and must not risk playing with fate;

but on seeing her disturbed and anxious he comforted her, calling her a child, and assuring her that everything should be as she wished.

They separated like friends who expect to meet the next morning; but it was a long time before she saw him again.

Her relations discovered the interview, and took decisive steps to keep the two apart. The acquaintance with the lady at whose house the meeting had taken place was rudely broken off, and Helene scarcely ever heard Lassalle's name mentioned by any of her friends. Lassalle tried in vain to meet her, and they did not see each other again until the beginning of the next winter at a Von Bülow concert, whither she went with Advocate Holthoff and his wife. Holthoff left his seat to go and speak to Lassalle, and during their conversation he was told about the acquaintance begun months before.

The Holthoffs were old and intimate friends of Helene's family, and she was allowed to go everywhere with them; consequently, when Holthoff told her that she could easily meet Lassalle at his house, she felt no scruple at accepting the offered opportunity. The sight of Lassalle at the concert re-awakened Helene's strong preference for him, and she told Yanko the next day that if Lassalle should ever want her she would give up everything and everybody and go to him.

Yanko said, with tears in his eyes, that she must do what was best for her own happiness.

A few weeks later, Helene went with the Holthoffs to a grand ball. She was beautifully dressed in a heavy white silk trimmed with white "illusion," and adorned with masses of fresh flowers—white roses and violets

mingled with silver wheat-ears. This costume contrasted well with her abundant red-gold hair, and she chose it in the hope of finding favour in Lassalle's eyes.

She was not disappointed. The mysterious sympathy between them made her conscious of his approach before she saw him; they met and conversed a long time together. Yanko was there also, and there was an ill-omened glance exchanged between the two men. During the conversation between Helene and Lassalle, he told her, *apropos* of his many difficulties, the "Story of the old man, the boy, and the ass," which she had never heard, adding that he had made his life-motto "I will not carry the ass!" ("Den Esel trage ich nicht!")

Also, in describing the character of Bismarck, he summed up the capacity and achievement of the great statesman in the significant phrase, "He does not carry the ass!" ("Der trägt den Esel nicht!")

Lassalle said he found the story by accident in an old book of fables, and this is the way he told it:

"Once upon a time an old man and his little grandson went to market, driving their donkey before them. On the way they met a man, who said, 'How stupid you are! You own a donkey and both of you go on foot!'

"So the grandfather set the boy on the donkey's back, and on they went.

"Pretty soon they met another man, and he said to the boy, 'With your young legs you ought to be ashamed to let this old man walk while you ride!'

"So the boy jumped down, and his grandfather mounted, and on they went.

"By-and-bye a peasant came along, and he cried out, 'What a selfish father you are to let this little boy go on foot in such a heat!'

"So the grandfather lifted up the boy in front of him, and on they went.

"Just before they reached the town they met a gentleman who wore gold spectacles and looked very wise, and he said:

"'Here is a case of cruelty to animals! Two persons riding on a poor donkey this hot day!'

"So the man and the boy got off, and as there was only one way left to satisfy everybody, they picked up the donkey and carried him to market on their own shoulders."

This second conversation between Lassalle and Helene, like the first, was based upon the assumption that they two belonged to each other, and must eventually come together; although both realized more fully than before the many and powerful obstacles which for the present kept them apart.

A few days after the ball Holthoff visited the house, and found Helene alone, her grandmother being asleep in her bedroom. He asked Helene whether she would be willing to marry a man who was a Jew and who was not a noble.

She answered, without hesitation, "Certainly; if the man is Lassalle!"

She then inquired whether Lassalle had sent him to ask her the question, and he answered evasively that he was not exactly sent, but he was to find out if possible.

The grandmother awoke just then, and Holthoff went to see her. With the best intentions in the world he consulted the old lady upon the subject of Lassalle's wishes; but the attempt was a failure, and soon afterwards Helene

was informed by her grandmother that she had written to Herr von Dönniges about Lassalle, and had received in reply a decided refusal of any offer on Lassalle's part for his daughter's hand. Helene was very angry, and asked her grandmother whether she had been authorized by Lassalle or herself to confer with her father. She said, "No, but Holthoff said"— "Then you and Holthoff may finish what you have begun!" cried Helene, adding that she and Lassalle did not care what anybody said or did with reference to their affairs.

She then left the room in a rage, and from that day the grandmother never ventured to enter upon the subject with her spoiled darling.

For several months after this incident Helene saw Lassalle only once, and that was in a box at the theatre, when her grandmother and Holthoff were also present, and no private conversation could be carried on. But it is probable that Lassalle made Holthoff the confidant of his feelings, for Holthoff began to talk frequently to Helene about Lassalle, and his wife also showed a lively interest in the affair. She described to Helene the plans for Lassalle's new house, and one day Holthoff came to ask Helene for her photograph for Lassalle's use. He wished to have the walls of his dining-room painted in fresco in Pompeiian style. He would take either the Trojan War or the Legends of the Edda for the subject, and in either case the heroine, whether Helene or Brünhilde, should have Helene's features.

Her style of beauty was very captivating to Lassalle's taste, and her hair was red-gold, a colour which he greatly admired. His jesting name for her was "Gold-fox" ("Gold-fuchs").

But although they heard each other spoken of continually, they did not meet. This continued separation seems strange and unnecessary; but the restrictions of German society are quite sufficient to keep up such a barrier between two young people moving in different spheres. It is true in Germany, as elsewhere, that "where there's a will, there's a way"; but in the present case it needed a strong will on both sides, and, unfortunately, Helene's character was lacking in decision, as her whole course of conduct shows. Lassalle recognized this fault on the first night of their acquaintance, when he declared that she was as "capricious as a child" ("willenlos wie ein Kind").

Helene's birthday came in March, and among other presents she received a large basket of flowers—violets and white rose-buds—with an anonymous poem written on paper bearing the initials "F. L." The same day Frau Holthoff came to congratulate her, and told her that Lassalle's sister was in Berlin, and was anxious to see her. So Helene went by invitation to a coffee-party at Holthoff's house, and met there Frau von Friedland, Lassalle's sister, who was charmed with her, and said she was exactly the woman she would have chosen for her brother's wife.

After a while the sister suggested that Helene should call Herr Holthoff out of his library, as was her custom when visiting there. Helene went to the library and gave the usual three taps on the door. She was bidden to enter by another voice, and on opening the door she found herself in Lassalle's arms. Holthoff was there also, and he made them both promise not to betray his agency in the affair, as Helene's family would never forgive him if they should hear of the meeting.

Then the two talked together, forgetting entirely their

friends in the parlour, until the ladies came and brought the coffee into the library.

Nothing was definitely arranged on this occasion, excepting that Lassalle, when summer came, should go to Helene's parents, and become acquainted with them as if by accident. He was certain that their repugnance would vanish as soon as they should know him personally.

Had either suspected that this pleasant interview would be their last meeting for a long time, they would not have played with their destiny so carelessly, and their future might have had a different ending.

But notwithstanding the powerful attraction between them, neither was as yet sufficiently in earnest to appreciate the dangers which threatened their affection, and to devise prudent measures for its preservation. Lassalle's long course of gallantry had undoubtedly weakened his power of concentrated attachment, and Helene's varied experience in coquetry had made her light-minded and fickle. Besides, their attention was diverted from each other by outside interests; Lassalle was busy with politics, and for Helene there was always the comfort and amusement of Yanko's assiduous devotion.

A few days after this delightful interview the grandmother was taken ill, and Helene travelled with her to various watering-places in search of health. After their return, Frau von Dönniges came to Berlin to see her mother, and be with her daughter, Helene's married sister, who was about to be confined. The sister died in child-bed, and the grandmother, after being ill all summer, died early the next winter.

During this time of trouble Yanko's attentions continued, and in the summer of 1863 Helene betrothed herself to him, although in yielding she told him frankly that if Lassalle (of whom she had heard nothing for months) should cross her path again, she would not promise to hold to her engagement.

The good grandmother, knowing that Helene was likely to come into conflict with her relations, sent for Yanko a short time before her death, and in a long conversation with him committed Helene to his care, and made him promise to do all in his power to protect her and to secure her happiness.

After the grandmother's death Helene returned home with her mother to Geneva, Switzerland. Her father was then *chargé d'affaires* in Berne, but, as the climate there was too severe, the family lived in Geneva.

The winter passed in social pleasures and short journeys, Helene, meantime, keeping up a regular correspondence with friends in Berlin, especially with Holthoff, who, however, refrained from any direct communication respecting Lassalle.

She knew of Lassalle's movements only through the newspapers, and as the papers which came to the house were all conservative in tone, the doings of the democratic agitator were criticised in a severe and unfriendly manner.

No doubt Helene's letters were shared with Lassalle, and the prospect of a future union was often discussed between the friends. Lassalle told Holthoff that he had only honourable views towards Helene, and that if on further acquaintance her character pleased him as much as her person charmed him, he would marry her if possible ; but, for the time, his attention was fully absorbed

by his political work, and he seemed to be in no hurry to decide his fate as regarded matrimony.

In March, 1864, Yanko arrived in Geneva for a visit of several weeks. The home circle, which included several families of Geneva, a few Hungarian emigrants, and Count Kayserling, an admirer of Helene's sister Margarethe, was rendered unusually lively by the social accomplishments of young Racowitza, he being a fine musician and a graceful dancer, and Herr von Dönniges began to take a great fancy to the youth whom he regarded as the future husband of his daughter.

In May Helene was taken ill with a fever, which left her exceedingly weak and nervous. The doctors ordered a change of air, and she was therefore allowed to join an English lady and her family, and the family of the American Consul, and go with them to a mountain resort near Berne.

LASSALLE AND HELENE

WHILE Helene was amusing herself in Geneva, Lassalle was hard at work in Berlin developing his socialistic system, and defending himself from Governmental interference and punishment as best he might. In March, 1864, he was involved in no less than five lawsuits. The penalty for the most important of these suits was three years' imprisonment, one hundred thalers fine, and five years' surveillance by the police ; but, after hearing Lassalle's defence, the judge dismissed the case.

The excitement of the trial, and the fatigues of business connected with the Working Men's Society, which he had founded, and of which he was President, wore upon Lassalle's strength and spirits, so that he felt the imperative need of repose and change of scene. He left Berlin early in May, with the ultimate intention of seeking rest and recreation in Switzerland ; but he travelled by short stages, having many things to set in order among his faithful adherents along the route.

He stopped first in Leipzig, where, in consequence of his intention to remain several months in Switzerland, he resigned his authority as President of the Working Men's Society to the first Vice-President, Dr. Otto Dammer.

He spoke publicly in Düsseldorf, May 13th ; in Solingen and Barmen, May 14th ; in Cologne, May 15th ; in Duisberg, May 16th ; and in Wermelskirchen, May 18th.

He was present at the central festival of the first anniversary of the Working Men's Society, held May 22nd at Ronsdorf.

Many of his remarks, both in public and in private, seemed to imply a presentiment of impending evil; though, at the time, such suggestions were attributed to his delicate health and the overwrought condition of his nerves. He told Gustav Levy, treasurer of the Society, that in case of his death Bernard Becker must succeed him as President, and in the Society rooms at Düsseldorf he said to several of the members :

"Next year this room will be hung in black !"

The following sentences from his anniversary speech at Ronsdorf seemed afterwards like a prophecy of his speedy death :

"However strong a man may be, there is always a possibility of his being overthrown. As you may well believe, I have not enlisted under this banner without the full consciousness that very probably my own ruin was involved in the step. The feelings which possess me at the thought that personally I may be set aside, I cannot express better than in the words of the Roman poet :

'Exoriare aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor !'

('When I am laid low, may a successor and an avenger
arise from my ashes!')

I trust that this powerful and national agitation will not perish with me ; but that the fire which I have kindled may extend its area so long as a single one of you is left alive !"

Lassalle left Düsseldorf May 26th, with Countess Hatzfeld, for Ems, where he stayed a month, and then returned to Düsseldorf, to present himself as defendant in a law-suit

growing out of a public speech which he had made the previous autumn, and in consequence of which he had been sentenced to a year's imprisonment. He had appealed from the decision of the court, and in this second trial he hoped to be acquitted, as he had been in a similar instance at Berlin. But although his defence was skilful and brilliant, he succeeded only in changing the term of imprisonment from a year to six months.

He left Düsseldorf, June 29th, for Cologne, and from thence went with the Countess to Frankfort, where he made a speech before the general assembly of the Working Men's Society. In company with the Countess and a few mutual friends he travelled for several days in the Pfalz, arriving finally at Karlsruhe, where the party separated. The Countess and her maid went to Wildbad for a course of the waters, and Lassalle proceeded to his favourite resort, Rigi-Kaltbad, in Switzerland.

For several days after his arrival he was exceedingly busy with correspondence relative to the work he had left behind him. His letters to the Countess show a disposition to give up his political enterprises entirely and quit Germany for ever, alternating with a desire to attempt some bold stroke in the interests of his party and in defiance of the established order of things at home.

There was evidently some great plan brooding in his mind, the details of which were as yet unrevealed to his co-workers in democratic agitation. The ensuing autumn was the time fixed upon for the development of his purpose, and Hamburg was the place chosen as the scene of action; but farther than that his designs remain a mystery, excepting that they were evidently connected with the Schleswig-Holstein embarrassment, concerning

which he had already committed himself to a policy inconsistent with his avowed principles, and at variance with the opinions of his fellow-labourers in the cause of the oppressed.

Expatriation was to be the resource in case of failure, and in moments of depression he seemed to favour that mode of release from trouble, even without any further struggle for success.

The Countess was continually urging him to quit the unequal combat. She wanted to live in Italy, and she wanted him to go there with her, being especially urgent at this juncture on account of the impending imprisonment, and also for fear that Lassalle might yield to the wishes of his sister, who had selected a suitable wife for him in the person of a wealthy and beautiful young Jewess of Vienna. Lassalle also seemed to feel a great dread of the execution of the sentence against his liberty. He told a friend in Düsseldorf that in his then delicate state of health he could not bear the confinement of a prison, and, if necessary, he should expatriate himself rather than submit to the punishment.

But it is hardly fair to judge of a man's earnest intentions by a few expressions in confidential letters written during a period of weak health and depressed spirits. Whatever rash plans Lassalle may have formed in solitude, his course of action, if he had lived, would probably have been corrected and shaped by the pressure of existing circumstances. The fact remains that he worked energetically for his party during his sojourn on the Rigi, from whence he sent off a mass of written instructions to his chosen agents at home for the promotion of affairs during his necessary absence.

One afternoon (July 25th, 1864), while he was writing busily, a peasant boy came to tell him that a lady wished to speak with him. He followed the messenger to the garden of the hotel and met there Helene von Dönniges, who had come up the mountain on horseback with her two lady friends, and having been informed by Herr Holthoff in a recent letter that Lassalle was on the Rigi, had sent to know whether he was staying at the hotel.

Lassalle joined the party at once, and they all proceeded to the Rigi Kulm to spend the night and see the next morning's sunrise. Helene's companions knew nothing of the previous attachment between herself and Lassalle, and asked whether he was a near relation, being struck by the resemblance between the pair. Further observation convinced them that they were watching the development of a highly interesting romance, and their sympathies were deeply enlisted for the handsome couple.

Lassalle did not waste the unexpected interview in empty compliments. He and Helene talked earnestly together, both seeming to realize that the time for a final decision had now arrived. He urged her to marry him without delay, assuring her that he could arrange matters so as to do without the usual formalities. They would then go directly to France, and Helene's parents would, doubtless, be reconciled to what they could no longer prevent. She, however, would not consent to such secret and hurried proceedings so long as there was any hope of arranging the matter openly and peaceably.

She asked him what the Countess would say to his marriage, and he replied that although she might oppose the plan at first, she would soon yield to her sincere desire for his happiness. He asked her whether he must

renounce Judaism and become a Christian, and she said "No." On her part, she confessed that her dread of destroying Yanko's hopes of happiness troubled her more than did her fear of the opposition of her parents.

When they parted, he sent telegrams and letters which overtook her on the route, and she answered those messages the same evening in a long and passionately earnest letter, in which she promised to become his wife, and declared herself ready to encounter all the difficulties which must be overcome in order to secure their mutual happiness. In allusion to the great fault of her character, a lack of decision ("*willenlos wie ein Kind*," Lassalle had often said of her), she claimed to have imbibed somewhat of his own fearless spirit during their recent interview; she felt, in the presence of her "friend Satan," as she called him, a relationship with his demoniac power; the warmth of his Satanic blood had infused strength and vigour into her own nature. She was ready to fight for the prize; she would even do wrong for his sake, in rejecting the lover who had been true to her so long, and to whom she had solemnly betrothed herself.

It is sad to find Helene mistaking the one true affection of her life for an evil temptation. The wrong was not in loving Lassalle, but in coquetting with Racowitza; and there was nothing "Satanic" in Lassalle's honourable courtship of her, nor in his demand for firm and consistent action on her part. The fact that in promising to marry Racowitza she could tell him in the same breath that if she should ever meet Lassalle again she would break her engagement, ought to have shown her the weakness of her conduct, and prevented Yanko from accepting his bride on any such terms.

But, alas ! as we sow so must we reap, and this painful harvest had all to be gathered !

Lassalle followed Helene to Wabern, three days after her visit to him upon the mountain.

During the interval he not only sent a number of notes and telegrams to her, but he wrote two long letters to the Countess at Wildbad, wherein, besides the political remarks already alluded to, he related his meeting with Helene, and did not conceal its probable results, although, evidently fearing opposition and possible mischief-making on the part of the jealous Countess, he omitted some of the facts, and urged her to remain where she was and finish her cure without reference to his movements.

Lassalle spent eight days in Helene's society ; the only entirely happy days of her life, she says.

In the solitude and freedom of that country sojourn they learned more of each other's feelings, tastes, and opinions than they had ever known before, and realized more fully how necessary they were to each other's happiness.

Lassalle told her much of his past life, and of his ambitions for their mutual future ; he also explained his business affairs, the amount of his income, and his plans with regard to his political work. He asked her what she had heard as to his connection with the Countess, and what she believed about it. She told him plainly that she had heard that when the Countess was still beautiful and he very young, he had been in love with her, and had lived in the closest intimacy with her ; that now she was old and he still young, they were merely good friends.

He thanked her for her simple and natural explanation, and said that she had stated the case about as it was, only

that he was also bound to the Countess by ties of gratitude, because, while he was yet a boy, she had laid her destiny with confidence into his hands. He had proved that the hands were those of a man; but he was grateful for the bestowal of her confidence before he could show that he was worthy of it.

Helene was satisfied with his explanations, and offered to write a filial letter to the Countess, and do all in her power to please her. She said to Lassalle, however, that she hoped it would not be necessary to have the Countess always with them after their marriage. He was highly amused, and assured her that they would keep to themselves, only visiting the Countess once a year. He asked her whether she was satisfied with the prospects he was able to offer, and she replied that her sole ambition was to be Lassalle's wife, and share his destiny. He was delighted, and assured her proudly that Ferdinand Lassalle's wife should one day be the first of all. He meant to struggle and to succeed, and it was surely more noble to be the President of a Republic, chosen by the people, than to sit upon a worm-eaten throne as a king "by the grace of God." He ended this rhapsody by calling Helene to his side before a mirror, and saluting her with a

"Hurrah for the Republic, and the golden-haired wife of the President!"

He said it might cost a bitter conflict, perhaps a long period of defeat and inactivity, before the final triumph; but there would be time enough for all that!

These expressions recall Bismarck's keen estimate of Lassalle's character and designs. "The dynasty Lassalle" was evidently preferable to "the dynasty Hohenzollern," in the agitator's view, although his ambition was, as yet,

limited to an electoral Presidency, and his views were not consciously "Monarchical."

One night, after she had gone to her room on the ground-floor and was looking at the moon, Lassalle came to the outside of the window and seated himself on the sill, and they talked there together nearly the whole night. He spoke freely of his political plans, feeling sure of her sympathy with his opinions. She asked him about a report she had heard of his having often been with Bismarck. He said it was true that they had held many conversations, which, however, led to no result, as they were both too cautious to compromise themselves. He talked a great deal about struggle and war; but implied that he meant the intellectual war of words, the power of eloquence to move and lead the people—blood and sword only as the last necessity, if the people or the rulers should be determined not to have it otherwise. On parting he held her in his arms, and whispered:

"How happy, how blessed shall we be when you belong entirely to me! And what a glorious wife I will make out of this child! Good night! Sleep well!"

Meantime the Countess had written long letters to Lassalle, advising him against rash conduct in his pursuit of Helene, and reminding him that only a very short time before he had been "dead in love" with another young lady (probably the Jewess in Vienna.) She regretted his having left the Rigi, and, in short, said all she could to influence him against his new determination. But it was too late. Lassalle replied that as to having been "dead in love" with another woman, such a state was beyond his comprehension; that, so far as the captiva-

tion of the senses was concerned, the woman alluded to was more attractive to him than Helene, but that he looked for something more in his wife, and in Helene he found a sympathy of tastes and purposes which he had never met before. He was firmly resolved to marry her, with the consent of her parents, if it could be obtained; if not, without it. He explained the situation of affairs to the Countess, informed her that he was about to go to Geneva, and requested her to follow him thither, as he would probably need her assistance in carrying out his plans.

Helene left Wabern on the third of August, by the morning train, which was due at Geneva at two o'clock in the afternoon. Lassalle was to follow by the next train, reaching Geneva at six o'clock.

It was arranged between them that Helene should not tell her family what had passed, but merely mention that she had seen Lassalle on the Rigi, and that he would soon come to Geneva and would call at the house, as he had long wished to make the acquaintance of Herr von Dönniges.

Lassalle went with Helene (and an old English lady who accompanied her) to the station. They took a hasty farewell, hoping to meet soon, perhaps the same evening, at the house of a mutual and "safe" lady friend in Geneva.

"Here end my happy memories!" is Helene's sorrowful conclusion to this part of her story.

THE CATASTROPHE

ON arriving at home, Helene found her family in the midst of great rejoicings over the betrothal of her younger sister Margarethe to Count Kayserling. The mother was especially tender, and said much to Helene of her devoted, self-sacrificing love for her children, and how the only wish of her heart was to see them all as happy as Margarethe. Helene naturally thought this the best moment for telling her own secret, and, responding to her mother's unusually affectionate mood, she confided her love, and her hope that her parents would not refuse their consent and sympathy.

To her great surprise, her mother's manner changed at once ; she became cold and severe, and her father, on being summoned to the conference, was extremely violent in his opposition.

Helene persisted in declaring that she would marry Lassalle ; whereupon her father said he would see to that, and in the meantime she was forbidden to leave the house. As soon as she was alone she wrote a hasty letter to Lassalle, and sent it by her maid to his hotel. Then she began a letter to Holthoff, but was interrupted by her father, who entered the room more angry than ever. He had just heard from one of his guests, Dr. Arndt, the most shocking stories about Lassalle's affairs of gallantry,

especially concerning his relations with Countess Hatzfeld, and he came to repeat them to Helene.

She rejected the stories as slanders, and continued firm in her determination to marry Lassalle; whereupon her father, whose temper was very violent, made a dreadful scene, cursing her and threatening her until he nearly drove her out of her senses.

As soon as she was again alone, and had thought over the matter a few moments, she seized her hat and mantle, slipped some money and a small dagger into her pocket, and stole out of the house unseen by anybody. She ran directly to Lassalle's hotel and found him just entering it, as he had come by a later train. Therese was handing him her letter as she came up. He saw her excited state, and as soon as she had sent Therese home with instructions to be ready to follow her as soon as she should send word, he took her into a room on the ground floor, where they could talk undisturbed.

She told him to read the letter, and then do with her what he chose; she was his wife, his property.

She was nearly fainting, and he laid her on the bed while he read the letter.

When he had finished he came to her, and said in a stern voice:

"If you had only acted as I told you to do! But disobedience to my wishes is the first thing you have to offer, and thereby you have spoiled the whole affair!"

Then, seeing her grief, he became more affectionate, and told her not to mind; he would soon set the matter right.

She begged him to flee with her instantly, as he had formerly proposed; now, there was not a moment to lose!

But, to her astonishment, he refused to elope with her. He insisted that he could bring her parents to reason, and that only from their hands would he take her as his wife. In the meantime it would not do for her to stay any longer with him; there must be no occasion for slander; he would take her to her friend's house for the moment, and telegraph to his mother and sister, and to the Countess; one of these would be sure to answer his summons without delay, and she could then go to a hotel under proper protection, and wait there until her marriage.

Helene assured him that such a plan would not answer; her parents would never yield. Their conduct in this matter had convinced her that they had no real love for their child; their motives were entirely egotistical, and they were determined to carry their point. She described in detail what had just happened at home, and repeated her father's remarks concerning the Countess.

But Lassalle would not be convinced. If they were so prejudiced against the Countess, he would not send for her; but against his mother and his sister they could have nothing to say. Just let him once see and speak to her father, and tell him his plans and intentions, and promise to go with her to India or to America, and stay away until the proper time to return. Oh! he was sure he could set everything straight! Besides, he would send for Holthoff, and he had friends enough in Geneva and in Berlin who would come forward in his defence: all that she had to do was to be calm and reasonable, and feel perfect confidence in him.

His eloquence partially quieted her fears; according to her own words she believed in him more than in God; she built her hopes more upon him than upon the destiny with which he was playing; and what was there left for

her to say or do? She had set all the conventionalities at defiance by seeking him openly at his hotel; she had offered to follow his earlier plan of elopement; she had felt able to meet with him every stroke of adverse fate; but his cold refusal to adopt the alternative which he had urged upon her when the necessity was much less than it was now, had depressed her courage and filled her spirit with gloomy forebodings of threatened disaster.

So she sat silent, gazing before her with eyes that heeded not what she saw; and Lassalle paced hurriedly up and down the room, arranging mentally his plan of battle, and apparently forgetful of Helene's presence.

Presently Therese came running in to tell them that Herr von Dönniges had already called the police and was searching for Helene; but she had brought a carriage, and there was still time for them to drive to the station and take the train for Paris.

Helene looked imploringly at Lassalle; but he said they would take the carriage and go to Helene's friend, and so they went there. Scarcely had they reached the house when they saw Helene's mother and sister coming, for the lady was a friend of the whole family. Being particularly interested in Helene, she wished to refuse admittance to the others, under the pretence that Helene was not there; but Lassalle declared that they were "sent from heaven," and he wanted to see them: so they all went down into the parlour.

However, his endeavours were completely thrown away, as Helene had assured him they would be. Frau von Dönniges was extremely rude and violent, and insulted him in every possible manner. Helene begged him to go away with her; but he persisted in trying to pacify the mother, asked her what she had against him, and offered to write to her

husband, or talk with him, if he preferred a personal interview.

She told him that he would be thrown out of the house by the servants if he should attempt to call, and if he wrote, her husband would send back the letter unopened.

These scornful remarks were supplemented by bitter reproaches for his having stolen their daughter.

He replied, "You say I have stolen your daughter. You shall see the injustice of your accusation. Helene, will you do anything I ask of you?"

Helene answered, "Yes." She was ready to go away with him immediately; she would obey him in everything; only he must not ask her to go back to the parents who had treated her so cruelly.

He said that was exactly what he did ask of her, and demanded whether she would do it.

She answered, "If he really required the sacrifice, she would yield; but he must consider well what he was doing, as she trembled for the consequences."

He replied firmly, "You will do it for my sake. And now, most gracious lady," he continued, turning to Frau von Dönniges, "I give you back your child. Listen to me. I, who can do with your daughter what I wish, resign her to your care, but only for a short time. She goes with you because I wish her to: never forget that! And now, farewell!"

Then he took Helene in his arms, and pressing her to his heart, he said:

"Farewell for a little while! What you are doing for me now, I will not forget. I can never thank you enough for your compliance. I require nothing more from your will, your strength. I know this is much to ask; all the rest is my affair. Do not allow yourself to be maltreated;

otherwise, submit to what is required of you. I shall know all that happens, and on the slightest ill-treatment, I will take you away at once: in any case, they shall not keep you long. Resign yourself for a short time to their will: mine is stronger; we shall conquer at last. And now, good-bye for a little while!"

One kiss, one pressure of the hand: he went away—and she never saw him again!

For a moment she felt like running after him and begging him not to leave her, but pride forbade. "He does not want you," she seemed to hear a voice whisper, like a prophecy of evil, and she felt stupefied, wishing only that she could die.

Immediately after Lassalle's departure, her mother went home to report what had happened: her sister remained beside her, crying. Suddenly her father burst into the room in a state of fury such as Helene had never seen before in him, and never saw in anyone else afterwards.

He was without a hat, and had a large knife in his hand. He uttered execrations against Helene, Lassalle, and even the lady of the house, because she had tried to oppose his entrance, until Helene said:

"Only be quiet: I will do as you wish."

"Indeed, you will!" he replied, with new abuse; "but not because your lover, that Jewish scoundrel, allows you to; it will be because I require it!"

Then he seized her by the hair and dragged and pushed and pulled her by the arm, by the hair, wherever he could get hold of her, across the street to their home. Arrived there, Helene was shut up in her room. Her father

nailed down the window himself and locked the door, telling her that she should stay there until she had changed her mind.

Almost stupefied by excitement, disappointment, and despair, Helene seemed to feel nothing and care for nothing more. Many incidents and facts as to time and place in the terrible occurrences which followed, were entirely forgotten by her; she was, so to speak, paralysed in her mind, and it is a wonder that she did not go absolutely crazy.

Nobody came near her. Her food was pushed in at the door, but she did not see by whom. Later, she learned that her father had threatened to shoot any person who should try to hold any communication with her, or with Lassalle in her behalf.

Every little while he came and asked her decision, and she always answered, "I shall marry Lassalle!"

As the time passed on, she wondered that she heard nothing from Lassalle, but even this wonder was not strong; she was incapable of feeling anything deeply, in her unnatural state of mind.

One night she heard something scratch against the door, and supposing it to be the dog, who was very fond of her, she got up, and asked in a low voice:

"Is it you, Peko?"

"No, it is I," answered her maid, Therese; "but nobody must hear us."

Then she told Helene that Lassalle was said to have left Geneva, and she thought it must be true, as nothing was to be seen or heard of him in the town. None of the family were allowed to leave the house, she said, and the visits of Helene's friend, Madame Rognon (at

whose house the last interview with Lassalle had taken place), were forbidden.

This well-meant communication was a misfortune, and did harm instead of good. Helene pushed under the door a letter to her English friend in Wabern, Madame Arson, but kept back a letter which she had written to Lassalle, because she supposed he had left Geneva. If she had only sent that letter, the whole course of events might have been changed!

Here, as in many other situations of this intensely exciting drama, the reader is astonished and irritated at the lack of judgment and prudence and common sense apparent in Helene's impulsive conduct. Where so much was at stake, it seems unaccountably strange that she should have relied so implicitly upon the hearsay evidence of an ignorant servant, as to keep back the letter which would have made the way plain for Lassalle to pursue. The most limited intelligence is able to perceive that she ought to have sent that trusty messenger to Lassalle's lodgings with the letter, directing her to ascertain with certainty whether he were still there, and to obtain knowledge of his whereabouts, in case he had really left the place. But such a course would imply the exercise of a sincere and sound intelligence, and, alas! sincerity and steadfastness were thus far not prominent traits in Helene's character. Her years of thoughtless, planless trifling forbade wise action in the fateful moments which decided her own destiny, and also that of the strong-willed man who was prevented by her weakness from using his strength to save them both!

Poor Helene passed a terrible night between her loneliness and her increasing doubts of Lassalle's faithfulness.

She reflected how short a time they had known each other, how the eight happy days in Berne were the only period of intimate converse they had ever enjoyed, and how small a part she must be of his busy and ambitious life. Nor could she forget that when she had really confided herself entirely to his help and support he had failed her and rejected her. But renewed faith came with morning light. She remembered his looks and words of affection, and said to herself that such love could not end so soon.

Her father did not visit her that day, but her sister Margarethe came with the younger children. They begged her with tears to yield to her father; they told her that he would lose his position if she persisted, that her brothers would forfeit their chance of making a career in the diplomatic service, and her sister would be prevented from marrying in their own sphere. In the evening her brother came and repeated the same arguments, afterwards her mother, and finally her father urged her compliance, assuring her that the whole family would be ruined if she did not yield.

There was not a word of truth in what they said: at least, the danger lay not in her marrying Lassalle, but in their making a scandal by trying to prevent the marriage; but Helene believed them, and her decision was gradually weakened. Her affection for her kindred was strong; Lassalle (she supposed) had left her without a word; she was enfeebled from the long excitement, and finally, she told her parents that if their happiness depended upon the sacrifice of her own, she would give up Lassalle.

Here again Helene's vacillating temper and inability to view the situation in its just proportions wrought disaster for all concerned. She had no right to sacrifice her

happiness to the whims of parents whom she had already denounced as cruel and selfish ; she had no right to desert Lassalle without his knowledge and consent, after having committed herself so unreservedly to his interests ; she had no reason to suppose that, if he had left her neighbourhood, it was for any other purpose than to provide means for her speedy rescue ; in short, her conduct is without excuse, excepting the one great and sufficient excuse, which must be made always and everywhere for everybody, namely, that natural disposition and acquired habits brought cumulative and retributive force to act upon her choice at the moment of fatal decision.

Great was the rejoicing over this victory. Helene was overwhelmed with demonstrations of affection ; she was pronounced "an ideal daughter" ; friends were summoned to congratulate the family, and champagne was drunk in celebration of the event.

Helene stayed, pale and sorrowful, in her own room ; spending her nights in weeping, and her days in silent indifference towards everybody and everything around her.

Seeing that she was really ill, her parents called a doctor, who advised immediate change of air. Just then the family heard that Lassalle's friends were arranging a plot to carry Helene off by force, and so, for fear of such a surprise, she was taken secretly by night through the garden, and, accompanied by her brother-in-law and several police officers, rowed across the lake in a small boat, and the next day carried to Bex, where she remained over a week, and whither she was soon followed by the rest of the family.

Then began a new martyrdom. Her father kept coming with notes and letters for her to copy and sign, the

contents being a declaration of her determination to give up Lassalle. At first she declined to set her hand to any such work ; but her father became very violent, said it would cost him his post if she refused, and threatened and coaxed until, worn out by physical weakness and despair, she again yielded. One of these notes was to Holthoff, and she was in hopes that he would recognize from the contents that she was forced to write false sentiments, especially as she had so recently sent him a jubilant account of her engagement to Lassalle.

She soon received a letter from Holthoff, which robbed her of her last hope in his aid. He urged her to give up Lassalle and yield to the wishes of her family, as that was the only way to retain the respect and sympathy of her former friends.

Holthoff never wrote such a letter, and it is strange that Helene did not suspect the forgery. She, who knew that her father was capable of forcing her to sign her name to sentiments the very reverse of what she really felt, might have known that he would not hesitate to borrow the name of another person in order to add strength to his own arguments. It is strange, too, that while she was busy copying her father's compositions, she did not do a little writing on her own account, and drop a letter slyly into the post, or trust some messenger to do it for her, she being allowed to go wherever she chose in Bex, accompanied only by her sister. But instead of devising some such practical way of helping herself out of the entanglement, she wasted the precious time in hoping that Countess Hatzfeld might come to her assistance (by way of reply to the dutiful and affectionate letter which she had written to announce her engagement), and in imagining that every strange lady she met might be the Countess, and every

workman in a blouse some friend in disguise sent by Lassalle to rescue her.

Such foolishness is doomed to failure; there are not guardian angels enough in heaven to avert catastrophe invited and courted in so many ways!

One day she saw from her window several gentlemen coming towards the house. They proved to be her father, certain friends of his, and Yanko Racowitza.

Soon Yanko appeared before her. He threw himself on his knees, kissed her hands, her feet, her hair, and exclaimed, "Will you take me?"

She thrust him from her, telling him that he had already received her last word, and that she was indifferent to everybody in the world excepting Ferdinand Lassalle. The only other feeling she was conscious of was hatred towards her parents.

Yanko told her afterwards, a short time before his death, that he was shocked and horrified at her looks and manner on that occasion. It required all his love for her, and all his promises to her dead grandmother, to keep him near her after that first interview. But his affection triumphed, and he urged her to give him a right to protect her from her parents. He told her at last that if she must see Lassalle, he would take her to him and let her choose between them.

She replied, pushing him farther from her, that it should be as he chose. Her life was no longer of any worth to her. Her family had made her what she was, and now they could finish their work. But she would warn him that if she should ever see Lassalle again, she would go to him and stay with him, even if her way to him lay over all their dead bodies.

He was shocked ; but she repeated her words, and then bade him leave her, for her head and heart pained her.

Again this deplorable weakness, this womanish inconsistency, this incurably silly treatment of a vital theme !

Racowitza went out, accepting her singular agreement with his proposal ; and from that time until his early death, he shielded her as well as he could from cruel words and harsh treatment.

Soon after his arrival, on the 16th of August, the family returned to Geneva.

Meantime Lassalle, totally unsuspecting of the complete change in the situation of affairs, through the diabolical deceit of Helene's parents and her own despicable weakness, was wearing himself out in efforts to obtain possession of the treasure he had so foolishly resigned to his enemies.

On the same day of the melodramatic interview in Madame Rognon's house, he was visited at his hotel by Count Kayserling and Dr. Arndt, who urged him to resign all claims to Helene's hand and to leave Geneva without delay, in order to avoid the trouble which Herr von Dönniges, in his capacity of Ambassador, was able to bring upon him. Lassalle rejected this advice, and demanded a personal interview with Helene's father.

The request was refused, and two letters which he wrote the same evening to Herr von Dönniges remained unanswered.

Lassalle passed a sleepless night. He began to realize the terrible mistake he had made in resigning Helene to her parents, the absurdity of attempting to win their favour by any delicate and generous conduct on his part, the

cruelty of rejecting Helene's perfectly justifiable demand for his protection, especially after his frequent proposals to her to take the very step which circumstances had at last shown to be the only means left to secure their union.

The thought of her—repulsed, and insulted by such a repulse, maltreated by her enraged parents, imprisoned beyond reach of his assistance, and all through his own unpardonably stupid blunder—made him “writhe like a worm” in the agony of his helpless regret.

He recalled that last decisive moment—the carriage at the door, the train ready to carry them to freedom and happiness, the faithful servant entreating them to flee, Helene's eyes raised to his in silent supplication—and he himself blind and deaf to the final efforts of friendly fortune!

In those hours of bitter self-reproach and eager longing, he first recognized the depth and extent of his love for Helene, the absolute necessity of winning her, in order to make his future life happy and successful, and he resolved to leave no means untried to remedy the monstrous error of a few hours before.

The next morning he wrote to his friend, Colonel Rüstow, who was then in Zürich, urging him to come to Geneva without delay. He sent also a longer letter to the Countess, giving an outline of his troubles, and desiring her to be ready to come to his assistance whenever he should telegraph that her presence was necessary. He set spies in the neighbourhood of the Von Dönniges mansion, and attempted to bribe the family servants to tell him what was going on inside the house. Herr von Dönniges discovered these plots, and employed all his influence as Ambassador to effect the banishment of Lassalle from Switzerland,

under the pretext that he was a dangerous political agitator and a tool of Bismarck. The Government refused to take so decisive a step; but Lassalle was warned officially to remove his spies, and to cease all interference with Herr von Dönniges' family affairs.

Count Kayserling and Dr. Arndt visited Lassalle again, August 4th. Dr. Arndt declared that his cousin Helene was desirous of breaking off all relations with Lassalle, and he produced a note from her to this effect, which was signed "Das Kind" ("The Child"). This was Lassalle's favourite pet name for her, and in using it as the signature of her note, she meant to let him know that she was forced to write what other persons dictated. Lassalle received it in this spirit, and its contents made no impression upon him. Dr. Arndt said further that Helene deeply regretted her past conduct, and had left Geneva in order that the affair might come to a speedy end. This also Lassalle did not believe.

Rüstow arrived in Geneva August 6th, and in his account he says that when walking out with Lassalle the same day, they saw Helene driving with another lady, and that she gave them a friendly greeting as she passed. They were mistaken, however; for Helene says in her memoirs that she was carried away by night, and that until the time of her departure she was not allowed to leave her room.

Lassalle, feeling himself to have been insulted by certain expressions used by Dr. Arndt in their recent interview, sent Rüstow to ask him for an explanation; but he had already left for Berlin, whither he was sent by Herr von Dönniges to bring back Yanko von Racowitza, as the best means of turning Helene's thoughts away from Lassalle.

August 7th, Lassalle wrote a long letter to Helene. He

had already been told that she had given him up, but he did not believe the story. He assured her that if any such concession had been forced from her, he knew it was only because she believed herself to be a minor, and therefore under her father's authority; whereas, in Switzerland, at least, she, being twenty-one years old, was of age and at liberty to act for herself. He reminded her that she was bound by every law of honour to keep her promises to him, as he had entered into the affair solely on condition of her firmness and constancy in the face of whatever obstacles might stand in the way of their union. He added that even if she should decide to sacrifice him to her father's will, he should demand one final interview, as he never would believe in her rejection of him unless he should hear the words from her own lips. The letter ended with assurances of his boundless love, a love so glowing that all his former protestations of affection seemed cold in comparison. This letter, as well as five others which he told her he had sent since their separation, never reached Helene; they were all, no doubt, intercepted by her father, who had his spies at work to prevent any communication between the severed pair.

Lassalle next telegraphed to Madame Arson, asking her to come to Geneva; but she, apparently preferring to keep out of the difficulty, left home immediately for Interlaken and sent a note of excuse through a mutual acquaintance.

After waiting in vain for a reply to his letter to Helene, Lassalle wrote again, August 10th, repeating his legal information, declaring that her father had no right to keep her a prisoner, and assuring her that as soon as she sent him word, he would come with his friends to

set her at liberty. He told her that he should soon leave for Germany in order to make arrangements for the final settlement of the trouble. The letter ended with renewed protestations of unending love, and scornful rejection of the rumours which had reached him of her unfaithfulness.

August 12th, Lassalle wrote again. He had in the meantime become aware that Helene was not in Geneva; but he trusted that the letter would be forwarded to her, or that she would receive it on her return. Even if her father should read it he had no objection, if only she might read it also. He urged her to be firm, and he would manage all the rest.

Before leaving Geneva, Lassalle wrote a short note to Helene, introducing his friend Colonel Rüstow, and telling her to put perfect confidence in him, as he was fully authorized to act during Lassalle's absence. In case of her acknowledging the reception of the note, Rüstow would send her two letters containing important directions.

Rüstow added a note of his own begging her to reply at once, as Lassalle was in great distress at the turn affairs had taken. He gave her a safe address at the *Poste restante*, in case of her not being able to write by the messenger. Nothing came of these attempts, however, and Rüstow heard afterwards that Helene had not returned to Geneva with the rest of her family, but was hidden in some other part of Switzerland.

August 13th, Lassalle started for Germany. His object was to secure the co-operation of certain persons of high position in Munich and elsewhere, who might be able to interfere in his behalf with Herr von Dönniges, or if that should not be possible, to induce the cruel father to relinquish, in his own interest, the persecution of his daughter, which thus far had been conducted in the

privacy of family life, but which, in case of the affair becoming public, might lead to his dismissal from the diplomatic service. Lassalle went first to Carlsruhe to confer with the Countess about what was best to be done. He imagined that a large share of the bitter opposition of Helene's parents was due to the fact of their being Catholics, while he was a Jew. He wished, therefore, that the Countess, who was also a Catholic, should consult with the Bishop of Mayence, who had often expressed sympathy with Lassalle's political ideas, and who could influence the ultramontane party in Bavaria (then very powerful) in his favour. Lassalle was willing to renounce Judaism and become a Catholic, if the change would forward his object.

The Countess undertook this mission, though not without first trying to induce Lassalle to give up the project of marrying Helene. The interview with the Bishop took place, but no action resulted from it, as upon further inquiry it was found that the Von Dönniges family were Protestants. Countess Hatzfeld went from Mayence to Berne, according to Lassalle's desire, where she met Madame Arson, and from whence she wrote long letters to Lassalle, who was in Munich; he on his part sending her minute explanations and instructions as to her further proceedings. It is easy to see from the correspondence that while Lassalle, judging from his own firm will and unshaken loyalty, believed Helene incapable of unfaithfulness, and ascribed her silence and her rumoured renunciation of him to the cruel conduct of her unnatural parents, Countess Hatzfeld and the mutual friends in Berne held quite another opinion concerning the matter, and consequently went to work with another end in view.

And both parties were right in their conclusions. Helene felt as Lassalle supposed she felt, and she acted as Countess Hatzfeld and Madame Arson said she acted—a fatal contradiction which could only lead to evil results !

Lassalle's strict injunction to the Countess was to take Madame Arson with her to Geneva, so that a personal interview with Helene could be arranged. Madame Arson, as a friend of the family, could not be refused admittance ; whereas it was highly improbable that the Countess would be allowed to visit at the house, or meet Helene elsewhere.

Lassalle, however, trusted too much to the friendship of Madame Arson. She had purposely left home at the beginning of the trouble, and now she was not at all desirous of accompanying the Countess upon what appeared to her a probably fruitless, and in any case an undesirable mission ; while the Countess preferred going alone, in order to manage the affair with Rüstow according to her own ideas of what was best to be done.

In her first letter from Wabern (August 19th), she told Lassalle that while Madame Arson was willing to do everything in her power to further his wishes, it was solely on his account. She was disgusted with the whole Von Dönniges family, Helene not excepted, and regretted extremely that the circumstances which gave rise to the scandal should date from Helene's visit at her house.

The Countess informed Lassalle of the arrival of Yanko Racowitza, and added that the friends at Wabern were of the opinion that a speedy marriage between Helene and the young Wallachian would be a lucky escape for Lassalle, although there was no immediate prospect of such an event taking place.

They all thought, however, that if Lassalle were to appear before Helene, she would fall at once into his arms,

implying that the man who happened to be nearest to her was for the moment the best beloved. One can imagine the bitter things said and felt by the indignant circle at Wabern, and how Madame Arson's displeasure strengthened the Countess in her jealous prejudice against the woman whom Lassalle was so eager to make his wife.

In the same letter the Countess advised Lassalle to remain a while longer in Munich, and use every means to secure the good offices of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and other powerful personages, in order that Herr von Dönniges might be threatened, if he refused to be coaxed, into submission. She reminded him that his strongest argument would be to demand his right, in view of Helene's positive promise to marry him, to hold a personal interview with her and receive her final decision from her own lips, uninfluenced by fear of her father's cruelty.

Meantime Colonel Rüstow, left alone in Geneva, was trying his best to work for the advantage of his absent friend. August 15th he wrote to Lassalle announcing that Count Kayserling and Dr. Arndt had called upon him, and that the latter had explained satisfactorily the expressions which, in the former interview, had seemed insulting to Lassalle.

August 18th, Rüstow sent a full account of a personal interview with Herr von Dönniges, at the latter's own request. Herr von Dönniges said that he would never agree to his daughter's marriage with Lassalle; but under other circumstances he should have simply withheld his consent, leaving her to do as she chose upon her own responsibility.

As the matter stood, however, she had been for several months betrothed to Herr von Racowitza, a match which

her parents had at first opposed, and later consented to only after strong solicitation on their daughter's part. The betrothal had now taken place with all due solemnity, and he felt bound in honour to see that the promise was kept, since Racowitza had not renounced the engagement on account of Helene's momentary unfaithfulness.

Rüstow replied that his standpoint was different from that of Herr von Dönniges, and he must be allowed to speak in his friend's behalf. Helene had solemnly promised to marry Lassalle, and Lassalle felt bound by that promise until it should be broken by Helene's own desire. There was reason to believe that she was not acting as a free agent, and therefore Lassalle was determined to use all the means in his power to secure her liberty.

To this Herr von Dönniges replied that his daughter was entirely free, and that there was not a word of truth in any charge of his having employed either personal abuse or moral force in his treatment of her.

Rüstow asked whether she was free enough to be allowed to receive a letter from Lassalle and read it undisturbed. Her father said, "Certainly," and sent at once a summons for his daughter to appear. She came, bringing with her a letter to Lassalle, which her father sealed without reading, and handed to Rüstow, who gave Helene the letter written by Lassalle in view of such an opportunity. Helene left the room, and returned in about half an hour. She said to Rüstow, without a trace of emotion, "Tell Herr Lassalle that I have read his letter; but it makes no difference as regards the contents of the note I have given you for him." Rüstow told her in reply that he should always be ready to forward any message she might wish to send Lassalle. She bowed in silence and then left the room.

Before sending Helene's note to Lassalle, Rüstow broke the seal and read it, as his friend had authorized him to do with any communication from that quarter. And this is what the note said (no wonder Rüstow declared to Lassalle that he did not know what to think of the lady, and could only stand still and stare with open mouth at such a revelation !):—

“HERR LASSALLE,

“Having in all sincerity and with the deepest regret acknowledged my fault to my betrothed bridegroom, Yanko von Racowitza, and been comforted by his forgiveness and the assurance of his unchanged affection ; having also informed your friend Holthoff of my decision before receiving his letter advising me to give you up, I now declare to you, of my own free will, that a union with you is not to be thought of, that I consider myself released from my engagement to you, and that I am determined to devote my future life to my betrothed husband in true and faithful love.

“HELENE VON DÖNNIGES.”

This letter, which was apparently written and delivered by Helene of her own free will, was (according to her statement) in reality dictated to her by her father, who compelled her to write it in readiness for the appointed interview. He also made her promise that, in case of her receiving a letter from Lassalle, she would not read it, but would give it unopened to Yanko, and, after staying out of the room long enough to give the impression that she had read and reflected upon the letter, would return and say that Lassalle's communication made no difference with regard to her decision.

It seems strange that Helene should have consented to this deceitful conduct, when the presence of an outsider would have been a defence against her father's cruelty. But she did not know that the stranger was Rüstow, the intimate friend of Lassalle, and his trusted agent in her affairs. Her father had mentioned him as an entirely disinterested and unprejudiced person, a messenger sent merely for the purpose of giving and receiving a letter; consequently her attention was not directed to this chance of rescue. Moreover, the whole drama, so far as she was concerned, was a case of hypnotism. Herr von Dönniges, through a long process of experiment upon his daughter's excited nerves, had obtained, for the time, complete control of her will, and the consequent power to dictate her words and actions. The lack of discipline in her childhood, the habits of carelessness and coquetry which characterised her youth, had weakened her judgment, and prevented the development of any firmness of purpose. She had unconsciously prepared herself for her fate; but as regards the final events of the tragedy, she cannot be considered as a free agent, nor as a responsible person. If she had entertained any suspicion of the truth she would not have met the stranger's eyes with a glance so cold and indifferent, nor could she have given him the letter without some betrayal of emotion which would have awakened his doubts anew. But she had fallen completely into her father's power, and, understanding as she did his contemptible by-play in sealing the letter, and knowing that his basilisk gaze was rivetted upon her during the interview, her will was benumbed into acquiescence with his stern determination.

The game was skilfully played; even Rüstow was impressed by Herr von Dönniges' apparently honest and

honourable conduct, and, after that encounter with father and daughter, was disposed to lay the greater share of blame upon the deceived and persecuted girl.

Rüstow wrote a second letter to Lassalle the same evening, advising him to write to Helene and say that he never would believe she was free to act according to her own feelings until she should tell him so herself in a personal interview. For his own part, he had decided to appeal to Racowitza, for he had no confidence in anybody he had yet seen. He was certain that Helene never would have received the letter if he had not given it to her with his own hand. He thought it possible to secure an interview between Helene and Lassalle, if Racowitza should agree to it and request that it might take place. As for the intervention of the Countess, there was no use in making such an attempt. The Von Dönniges family were so prejudiced against her that she would not be able to help in the matter, except indirectly. Rüstow added that Herr von Dönniges assured him that Helene, on hearing of Lassalle's intended return to Geneva, had written to him, or sent him word, not to come.

As no other mention of such a letter or message was ever made, the story was probably only another of Herr von Dönniges' deceitful inventions. His utter lack of sincerity in the affair was shown also in his reception of Rüstow's assurance that Lassalle was willing to become a Christian if his Judaism stood in the way of his marriage. To this concession he replied that so sudden a change, and for such a reason, was against all his convictions; and when Rüstow reminded him that Frau von Dönniges was a Jewess and had become a Christian just before her marriage, he remarked:

"That happened long ago!"

Rüstow had also been told by other persons that Helene's marriage with Racowitza was being hurried on, and would take place as soon as the necessary arrangements could be made.

The next day (August 18th) Rüstow wrote again, assuring his friend that the prospect was very dark. It seemed to him that the only safe plan left was a speedy elopement, and, if Lassalle agreed, he would ask Helene whether she would allow herself to be carried off. It was plain that nothing was to be effected by mild measures. Lassalle must have possession of the girl in order to be sure of her.

Lassalle answered this letter (August 21st), approving of Rüstow's suggestion, if it could effect the desired result. Helene's letter of renunciation had in the meantime been received, and although Lassalle believed that it had been extorted from her, still he began to realize how little dependence was to be placed upon her constancy. He felt the difficulty of combating at once with her father's obstinacy and her own instability, and was ready to assent to whatever plan of circumvention his friend might devise: abduction, by trickery or by force; anything to free Helene from her father's authority, and make her the property of her lover, really as well as theoretically. Lassalle even implied that he was willing to allow Rüstow to be his substitute in this extreme measure, if the decisive moment should occur during his absence. Rüstow alluded to the "Rape of the Sabines," reminded Lassalle of his confidential interviews with Helene on the Rigi, in Wabern, and at his hotel in Geneva, and advised him, in case of another so good an opportunity being granted him, to take advantage of it without hesitation. The correspondence between the friends upon this point was not to their credit;

but it must be remembered that they were only suggesting desperate means for desperate circumstances. Lassalle's honourable treatment of Helene when she was in his power seems to have astonished his friends, and it was certainly a proof that, in spite of the lightness of his general conduct, he wished to feel a true respect for the woman whom he intended to make his wife.

In the same letter Lassalle informed Rüstow that Holthoff did not write the letter received by Helene as coming from him, wherein she was advised to give up Lassalle; on the contrary, Holthoff was enraged against the Von Dönniges family, and ready to do all in his power to promote his friend's union with Helene. The Government officials were also on his side, and their influence was likely to bring Herr von Dönniges to reason. Through his friend Hans von Bülow, Richard Wagner had become deeply interested in the affair, and, if necessary, would appeal personally to the King (Ludwig II.) for assistance. Countess Hatzfeld had written from Berne that Madame Arson would do her best to open communication with Helene, and, to make success more certain, the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Munich had delegated an advocate, Dr. Haenle, to accompany Lassalle to Geneva, and, if possible, arrange the affair amicably with Herr von Dönniges; if not possible, Dr. Haenle was authorized to summon Helene before a notary, to declare her decision in the presence of Lassalle, and free from her father's interference.

Lassalle wrote also to the Countess, informing her of the success which had attended his efforts in Munich, and declaring that although Helene's conduct was discouraging, still he firmly believed her to be acting under compulsion, and therefore deemed her excusable for seeming caprice. The intervention of Dr. Haenle appeared to promise a

speedy solution of the difficulty, and Lassalle was willing to abide by the issue of an interview before a notary, provided that Helene was informed beforehand of the project, and allowed sufficient time to prepare her mind, and to realize that she was free from her father's authority, and might speak as she really felt. Lassalle was the only person who seemed to measure justly the benumbing and bewildering effect which parental tyranny would be likely to produce upon a girl of Helene's character, and if he could have managed the affair himself, perhaps he might have won the day. Surely he, of all other men, had reason to exclaim, "Save me from my friends!"

Many letters and telegraphic despatches were exchanged between Lassalle, Rüstow, and the Countess during the next four days. Rüstow was instructed to inform Helene of the Ministerial plan, but on no account to allow Herr von Dönniges to hear of it. Rüstow was also to ask Helene whether, in case of her accepting Lassalle before the notary, she would be willing to leave her family at once, and place herself under the protection of himself, the Countess, and the law, and then go with him to Italy as his wife.

But although Lassalle still hoped for a happy ending to his complicated troubles, he did not lose sight of the possibility of a mortifying catastrophe. In his letters to Rüstow and the Countess he pictured his ridiculous and embarrassing position in case Helene should say "No" instead of "Yes" when summoned before the notary.

"If such a thing should happen," he exclaims, "I should be ruined through the most shameful treachery, the wickedest betrayal that was ever perpetrated under the sun. But so entirely lost to all sense of honour she cannot be; it is impossible, and I still hope."

He wrote a touching and eloquent letter to Helene with reference to the note of rejection which she had sent him, and enclosed it in a letter to Rüstow, with an earnest charge to deliver it to Helene immediately. It was never delivered, however, and even if it had reached her she would probably have handed it to Yanko unread, as she did before.

Rüstow obtained the desired interview with Racowitza, August 20th; but the result was not satisfactory. The young man could not, or would not, agree to a meeting between Lassalle and Helene, and contented himself with remarking that Helene's conduct ought not to be a matter of surprise, as she had once left him to go to Lassalle, just as she now left Lassalle to return to him. Helene's letter of renunciation had grieved him deeply; but he had resigned himself to his fate, and Lassalle must learn to do the same.

Countess Hatzfeld arrived in Geneva August 20th, fully prepared to put the worst construction upon what Rüstow had to tell her of Helene's conduct, and entirely convinced that a union with such a woman would be the worst possible fate for her favourite, Lassalle. Two days after her arrival, she sent the following letter to Helene:—

“*MADemoiselle von DÖNNIGES,*

“I am come to arrange an affair which has taken an unfortunate and improper shape. I consider myself justified in my interference, because of my long friendship with Herr Lassalle, and because of the entire confidence with which he has placed the whole matter in my hands, as well as on account of the letter which you wrote me recently.

“You must allow that it is even more for your interest

than for that of Herr Lassalle that your connection with him should be dissolved in the most delicate manner. This can only be done through my assistance, and I have decided, out of true friendship for Herr Lassalle, to undertake the unpleasant task. To this end I request you to come to me either to-day or to-morrow between three and four o'clock in the afternoon; for delay at present is dangerous. I consider it beneath my dignity to assure you that you have no exciting interview to fear; at the same time I am convinced that through my action in this affair, you, more than any other person, will owe me gratitude.

“SOPHIE, COUNTESS HATZFELD.”

It is impossible to acquit the Countess of wilful malice in writing and sending this letter. Lassalle's injunctions were positive, not to attempt any negotiation herself, and when she left Wabern, it was with the understanding that Madame Arson should follow in a few days and speak her mind freely to both Frau von Dönniges and Helene about what had taken place since she had seen them. In the book published by the Countess after Lassalle's death, she gives this letter in a milder form, although she acknowledges that it is compiled from notes and may differ somewhat from the original.

She gives in the same book another letter, written in reply to Helene's affectionate announcement of her engagement, but which was never sent to Helene. It was found, the Countess says, among a mass of Lassalle's papers, which she examined a long time after his death. It is full of tender recognition of Helene's claims, and of admiration for Lassalle's character; but the fact that it was dated August 7th, after she had been informed of

Helene's imprisonment at home, and that it was found, or pretended to have been found, among Lassalle's papers, is sufficient to stamp the production as a later invention of the Countess, designed to remove a portion of the heavy weight of blame imposed upon her by public opinion, on account of the part she had played in the dreadful tragedy. The contents of the note just quoted were well calculated to irritate and estrange Helene, and were in direct contradiction to the influence which Lassalle wished the Countess to exert, and from which he hoped for a fortunate result.

And Helene, weak and hasty in this instance as she had been in every other, fell at once into the trap. The servant who brought the letter was told that there was no answer, and Helene gave him simply a piece of paper upon which was scribbled in French, "Letter received. Helene von Dönniges." She showed the letter to her mother and Yanko, and then carried it to her father, with the comment, "You are right. The Countess must be an abominable woman!"

Helene's careless acknowledgment of the letter was considered an insult, and Rüstow, at the Countess' request, wrote to Herr von Dönniges, complaining of this rude conduct, and threatening that in case Helene did not make the requested visit, he would no longer restrain Lassalle, as he had heretofore done, from taking certain steps which would seriously injure Herr von Dönniges' official position. Rüstow expressed his opinion that it would be a great misfortune for Lassalle to marry Fräulein von Dönniges; but at the same time, Herr von Dönniges and his family must understand that such a man as Lassalle and such a woman as Countess Hatzfeld were to be treated with respect, and not ignored as though they were gipsies.

This letter crossed on the way the following note written by Helene to the Countess :—

“COUNTESS HATZFELD,

“Three days ago I gave to Colonel Rüstow my written decision for Herr Lassalle, which was made voluntarily and without coercion. I therefore consider the whole affair as ended.

“HELENE VON DÖNNIGES.”

Herr von Dönniges sent a short note in reply to Rüstow's communication, and later in the same day a long letter, wherein he declared that having considered Rüstow as a disinterested party, he had spoken his opinion freely and frankly, and had given him an opportunity to deliver Lassalle's letter into his daughter's own hand, and to convince himself that she was free to act for herself, as she left the room with the letter and returned of her own accord to give Rüstow a note for Lassalle containing her withdrawal from all relations with him.

As for Countess Hatzfeld's letter, it was a mistake to suppose that any rudeness was intended. The letter was handed secretly to Helene by the maid, and afterwards shown to her mother and to her betrothed bridegroom. She merely acknowledged at first the reception of the letter, with the intention of replying later, which she had already done. There was no address mentioned in the Countess' communication, and he had himself asked the servant for the name of her hotel. At the same time he must say that his daughter should never, with his consent, exchange a word with Countess Hatzfeld, a resolution in which his wife, his daughter and her promised husband fully coincided. As regarded Lassalle, he had already told his nephew, Dr. Arndt, that he was perfectly willing to

have a personal interview with Lassalle on his return to Geneva. He could not reply to Lassalle's letters because no address was given, and he was about to write under cover to Holthoff in Berlin, when Rüstow's visit removed the necessity of a reply. With regard to Rüstow's threats, he had only to say that he had never attempted to protect himself under his diplomatic standing; on the contrary, he had left Geneva for a week with his family in order to prevent scandal, and had not appealed to the police any further than to cause Lassalle's spies to be removed from his neighbourhood. To this Rüstow replied that after what had passed he should withdraw entirely from the ungrateful task of trying to mediate between the contending parties. As for the letter, the servant certainly brought back word that there was no answer; the three words of acknowledgment were handed later. And if Fräulein von Dönniges could not receive letters excepting with the permission of her mother, it was a proof that, although no longer a minor, she was held under restraint.

That Herr von Dönniges had told his nephew of his willingness to meet Lassalle did not help the matter, for to Rüstow himself he had repeatedly declared that an explanation with Lassalle was not to be thought of. That Lassalle was absent need not be a hindrance to such a meeting, as he could be summoned at any moment by telegraph.

As for the conduct of Fräulein von Dönniges, he must say that he could not consider so rash a change from one love affair to another as a light matter, and, as he told Herr von Racowitza, after what had passed between Lassalle and the young lady he thought it only right to demand a personal interview, and also that Racowitza should withdraw his pretensions for at least six months,

in order to give time for a full understanding between all concerned, and in conformity to the decencies required by civilized society. The eight days' absence from Geneva was not enough, especially as Racowitza was with the family during that time. Rüstow also reminded Herr von Dönniges that he had endeavoured to make use of his official authority to effect the banishment of Lassalle from Switzerland.

In this correspondence Herr von Dönniges appears in a very favourable light ; but his letter, like all the rest of his conduct, was, according to Helene's explanation of events, a lie from beginning to end. The way in which he refers to Rüstow's visit, and to Helene's reception of Lassalle's letter and delivery of her own, shows how thoroughly false he was. And instead of Countess Hatzfeld's letter having been given secretly to Helene by her mother's maid (which would imply that if Helene had wished she could have received and sent letters through the same person, unknown to her parents), it was brought to her by her father, who allowed her to read it only under a promise to answer it through him alone. She gave the promise, and she says it was her father who dictated the reply. Another evil effect of the Countess' letter was to prejudice Helene against Lassalle's most intimate friends, and this dislike was strengthened by her father, who took occasion to remark in her presence that Colonel Rüstow was really a very sensible and reasonable man ; that although he cherished an astonishing regard for the Countess, still he was judicious enough to see that it would be impossible for Lassalle to marry into such a family as the Von Dönniges. Rüstow had said that Lassalle would get over the disappointment after a while.

He was very eccentric, to be sure ; but he would at last see that such a union was impossible.

Helene listened, and from that moment she began to doubt the faithfulness of Rüstow, and to hate him as she hated the Countess. She did not lose her confidence in Lassalle ; still she was forced to acknowledge to herself that she knew him very slightly ; and then, he had deserted her when she needed him most, and these people who were betraying him and her were his chosen friends ! His sudden departure and prolonged absence were suspicious, and in all this weary time she had received only one token from him, the letter which she had resigned unread ! She had given it to Yanko at her father's command ; but Yanko had promised her privately to give it back after two months, and had also offered of his own accord to take her himself to Lassalle, and let her choose between them. Only he had begged her to yield for the moment to the wishes of her parents, in order to calm their anger and secure more liberty for herself and for him, and she had yielded because she trusted Yanko, and believed that he really desired her happiness.

This important letter is not contained in the published correspondence. It was probably destroyed, as Helene makes no mention of having read it at a later period. Repetitions of a part of its contents are, however, found in other letters, which were never allowed to reach her, and from these one can see that if those eloquent protestations of affection, and comforting assurances of speedy help, and glowing exhortations to unshaken constancy could have been read by her, the result might have been entirely different.

Also, if Lassalle's last letter could have reached her, it might have roused her from the trance in which she

was held by her father's powerful will. For this is what Lassalle wrote :—

“HELENE !

“I write to you with death in my heart. Rüstow's despatch is a deadly wound. You, you betray me? It is impossible! I cannot believe that you are guilty of such disloyalty, such dreadful treachery! You have been robbed of your free will; you do not know yourself for the moment; but it is not to be believed that those cruel words express your real and lasting decision. You cannot have thrown off all shame, and love, and faithfulness, and truth so completely! Such conduct would bring disgrace upon yourself and dishonour upon human nature; it would give the lie to every noble impulse! If you are capable of so extreme a degree of baseness; if you can deny your sacred oath, and break a faithful heart, then there is nothing left to confide in under the sun! You encouraged me to strive for your possession; you demanded that I should exhaust all peaceable means of reconciliation with your parents, instead of eloping with you from Wabern; you gave me the most binding promises, both written and spoken; in your last letter you declared that you were determined to become my wife, and that no power on earth should prevent your carrying out that determination. And when you had won my faithful heart, which once given is given for ever, you throw me off at the very beginning of the struggle, and after only fourteen days of trial you betray me, and turn with a contemptuous laugh from the abyss of misery into which your conduct has plunged me! Yes, you have succeeded in doing what my enemies tried in vain to accomplish; you have ruined and destroyed the strong man whom no storm of misfortune had been

able to subdue! I cannot bear this treachery—it is killing me!

“It is not possible that you can be so dishonourable, so shameless, so void of all sense of duty, so entirely despicable and unworthy! You would deserve my deepest hatred and the scorn of the whole world if it were true! Helene! it is not *your* decision which you confided to Rüstow. It was beguiled from you through a perversion of your noblest instincts. You will repent it—oh! listen to my words—you will repent it with bitter tears all the rest of your life, if you now persist in that refusal. Helene! true to my assurance, ‘*Je me charge du reste,*’ I am here at work doing all in my power to overcome your father’s opposition, and already I have secured assistance which is likely to bring success. But even if this should fail I have thousands of other resources, and shall eventually be able to remove all obstacles, *if you only remain true*, for neither my strength nor my love knows any limit. ‘*Je me charge toujours du reste!*’ The battle is scarcely begun, little coward! And while I sit here and accomplish such great things for our future happiness, you are betraying me yonder, tempted by the flattery of another man!

“Helene! my destiny lies in your hand! But if you betray me through this villainous treachery which I cannot overcome, then the responsibility of my destruction will rest upon you, and my curse will follow you to your grave. It is the curse of a true heart, broken by your deceit, lost through your disgraceful coquetry, and that curse will surely do its work!

“According to Rüstow’s despatch, you demand the return of your letters. You shall never have them until after you have granted me a personal interview. For I must see and talk with you alone. I must receive my

sentence of death from your own lips ; otherwise I cannot believe that you have uttered it.

"I have yet several matters to attend to here, and as soon as they are arranged I shall come to Geneva. My fate rests with you, Helene !"

It is possible that Rüstow could not secure any means of forwarding this letter to Helene ; but it is certain that after the arrival of Countess Hatzfeld he seemed much less earnest in his endeavours to execute Lassalle's wishes. He had long been an intimate friend of the Countess, and was greatly under her influence, and her evident desire was to separate the lovers. To this end it was essential to keep Lassalle away from the scene of conflict, and telegram after telegram was despatched, urging him to remain afar until more certainty was attained and new discoveries made.

Immediately after the reception of Helene's note declining the proposed interview, the two friends sent a long despatch to Lassalle ; and although fictitious names were employed, the meaning of the message was plain, and was to the effect that Helene's conduct was shameful, and that if cited before a notary she would be sure to reject Lassalle ; that the father must be threatened into submission ; and that Dr. Haenle's interference was needed without delay.

As the Bavarian law requires that the contents of every telegram shall be submitted to government inspection, this despatch was highly imprudent ; and implying, as it did, that the Minister of Foreign Affairs was being made a tool of for an unjust purpose, Lassalle was angry, and telegraphed back a sarcastic message of reproof, with the announcement that he should start immediately for Geneva.

Just before leaving Munich he wrote a long letter to Hans von Bülow, which betrays great depression of spirits, although giving evidence of untiring energy in the work of overcoming his difficulties. The following extract seems like a prophecy of his impending fate. He says of Helene :

"I called her 'Brünhilde,' partly because her personal appearance answers so fully to the character, partly because Siegfried carried Brünhilde out of the 'wabernden lohe' (flickering flame), and I meant at least to carry off Helene from Wabern. But I am sorry now that I gave her the name. For Siegfried never possessed Brünhilde, and they went unmarried to Hel and Walhalla. One should never choose a name of bad omen !

"Farewell, dear friend. This life is a miserable dog and monkey comedy ! It is all disgustingly mean and filthy !

"Farewell, farewell !"

While this unfortunate affair was rapidly approaching its final crisis, Helene was consoling herself as best she might with the attentions of her bridegroom. He, as well as her parents, had been delighted with her outburst of indignation against the Countess, and they all did what they could to keep her in that rebellious mood. Her mortification on account of Lassalle's apparent desertion, and her distrust of his chosen friends, made her more susceptible to the charm of home associations and of Racowitza's unfailing devotion. The lady's maid had many stories to tell the neighbours about Helene's forgetfulness of Lassalle and delight in Racowitza's caresses. It was said that she passed those pleasant summer days in the secluded garden, seated on the grass and resting

in her lover's arms. Much of this information may belong to the exaggerated gossip of the servants' hall; but it is certain that, for the time, she was carried away by the influences so sedulously brought to bear upon her, and imagined that her deeper feelings had been conquered, or transferred. Her nature was essentially volatile, and she was easily swayed by her warm, but varying, affections. The parents, and brothers and sisters, whom she had known all her life, were still very dear to her, and Racowitza had been her avowed lover for years: it is, therefore, less surprising that, entirely ignorant as she was of the real state of affairs, she should yield in some degree to the opinions of her family and the wishes of her betrothed husband.

It is harder to comprehend how she, who knew her father's treachery and her mother's cruelty, and her lover's insignificance, could be so easily beguiled into submission, and led to believe what she had every reason to consider a lie. It was probably because at that time the truth was not in her, any more than in the rest of her family; she was paying the penalty of a long course of affectation, and flattery, and petty deceit.

But she was soon to be awakened from this fancied content. A rumour reached her that Lassalle had returned to Geneva. She did not dare inquire of anybody; but her thoughts flew to him at once; her hope and confidence in him grew strong again. She remembered how he had said, "Submit to what is required of you; be patient for a little while; I will make it all right; we shall conquer!" and she wondered what he would now do to fulfil his promise, and what he had been doing in the long weary absence.

The morning after she had heard the exciting news, as

she was sitting alone, indulging dreams of speedy release, and recalling how Lassalle had declared when they were on the Rigi together that she belonged to him and should be his, even though he had to snatch her from the altar when about to be married to another man, when her father entered the room. He approached her with a commiserating air, and said in a pathetic voice :

"My poor child ! Yours is indeed a sorrowful fate ! The persons upon whom you so innocently set your heart have repaid you with shocking baseness. They are even more contemptible than I believed them to be !

"Lassalle (probably through the influence of that miserable Countess Hatzfeld) has just sent a man to me to ask for the return of his letters and presents !"

Helene exclaimed, "That is impossible ! Lassalle would never do such a thing !"

Her father scowled ominously, and said, "I suppose you do not doubt my word ! And it is certainly beneath your dignity to retain the smallest note, or to delay a moment in sending back the things. Where are they ? Give them to me, the man is waiting."

"May I give them to him myself ?" she asked timidly.

"No ; that would be extremely improper. Seal up the letters, put the presents by themselves in the box, and be quick, or you will probably receive another of Countess Hatzfeld's messages !"

That allusion took effect. Helene packed the presents (certain jewels which Lassalle had given her at different times), handed them with the letters to her father, and fell back weeping on the sofa.

Her father left the room, but returned in a few moments to say that it would be better for her to write a note,

saying that she returned the presents, though there was no need of mentioning the letters. She did as he bade her, thinking that perhaps, if the request had been made by the Countess, unknown to Lassalle, he would see by the note that she was compelled to act as she did. She signed the paper "Child" ("Das Kind"), which was his favourite pet name for her, and took comfort in believing that the word would explain her conduct to him.

She never heard anything more of the matter ; but long afterwards she learned that her father had made up the story in order to get possession of the letters, and had sent back the jewels to Lassalle on purpose to insult him. Perhaps Helene's note was not forwarded, or the suggestive signature may have been removed: Lassalle never mentioned the subject, and probably scorned to notice the transaction in any way.

What he wanted was to see and talk with Helene, and his endeavours to effect that purpose occupied him fully. He was disappointed to find that his last letter to her had not been delivered ; he was angry with the Countess on account of her injudicious management of the affair, and all his former distrust of her motives revived. However, the blunders, or double dealing, of his agents called for increased energy and circumspection on his own part, and he began operations by sending to Herr von Dönniges, by Dr. Haenle, a written request for a personal interview. The letter was polite, but decided, and it brought a reply consenting to the interview, which took place the same day and lasted several hours, but did not alter the condition of affairs. Both parties gave a written account of the conversation to Dr. Haenle ; but the two reports differ in many particulars, and Lassalle's is probably the correct one.

The important point was, of course, the question of Helene's freedom of will. Her father declared that she was not constrained in any way, and he accused Lassalle of lying and slandering, in having spread reports of personal abuse. He demanded the authority for such a charge, and Lassalle mentioned Mons. Vaucher, Herr von Dönniges' landlord, who had been told the story by the Von Dönniges' cook. The cook was immediately summoned, and denied ever having said anything of the kind. Herr von Dönniges then showed Lassalle various assertions contained in letters to Holthoff, wherein the landlord was often quoted as having furnished the information.

How Herr von Dönniges came into possession of Lassalle's letters to Holthoff has never been explained. If Holthoff himself furnished them, it could only have been in the hope of convincing Herr von Dönniges of his own danger as a Government officer in provoking Lassalle to make the scandal public.

After this subject had been discussed at length, Lassalle demanded, in proof of Helene's freedom, that he should be allowed to visit her without hindrance for a period of fourteen days; or else that previous to giving her decision she should meet him in the ante-room of the notary's office, and converse with him for two hours without witnesses, or with no other witness than Colonel Rüstow, who was already privy to all that had passed. The interview was requested for the purpose of allowing Helene to speak her mind freely, and to be prepared to make her decision before the notary, uninfluenced by fear of her parents. And in order that she might feel free on that occasion, Lassalle demanded that her parents should not be present, but should delegate some other

member of the family, or some intimate friend, as their representative. In this connection he asked Herr von Dönniges whether he could declare that Helene's rupture of the engagement was her own act, uncontrolled by his commands; and Herr von Dönniges was obliged to own that he could not make such a declaration. He refused to permit Lassalle's visits, but finally consented to allow Helene to give her decision in Lassalle's presence, before a notary.

After the interview was ended Herr von Dönniges asked his landlord whether he had ever stated that Helene had been corporally abused; and the landlord not only denied the charge, but threatened to make legal complaint against Lassalle for slander.

But although M. Vaucher protested so strongly, he had really repeated what the cook had really told him, to the very lawyer whom he now proposed to consult; and Lassalle, in anticipation of further trouble upon this subject, applied to his friend Colonel Johann Philip Becker, for proof. Colonel Becker replied at once by an attestation, declaring that Lawyer Ambernay had often told Lassalle in his presence that Herr Vaucher had related to him how, according to the cook's story, Herr von Dönniges had dragged his daughter over the parquet floor by her hair, and otherwise maltreated her. And Herr Ambernay, having been told by Vaucher of Herr von Dönniges' knowledge of the reports, replied that Lassalle was not to blame, because Herr von Dönniges had obtained his information through a private letter to Herr Holthoff, and however unpleasant it was for him to be mixed up in the affair, he should not hesitate to confess that he had repeated the story to Lassalle.

A copy of Becker's letter was sent by Lassalle to Herr

von Dönniges, who made no further attempt to defend himself against the accusation. Helene's memoirs, written many years later, fully substantiate this charge, and tell besides that he dragged her, and pulled her, and pinched her all the way across the street from her friend's home to her own. Herr von Dönniges' well-simulated innocence was another proof of the utter falsity of his character; and it was not shame on account of his cruelty which prompted his denial, but merely anxiety lest such reports should injure his career as a diplomatist.

His next exploit was to evade the promised interview before the notary, which he had reason to fear would lead to a discovery of his tyrannical and deceitful conduct. And to this end Helene must again be intimidated. She had been kept in total ignorance of what was going on; she did not know that Lassalle had been in the house, nor that Rüstow, and Klapka, and other interested parties had frequently been summoned to discuss the difficulty.

The morning after Lassalle's visit her father came to her room before she was entirely dressed, and, sending away the maid, said to her in a very solemn tone :

"I have one more sacrifice to ask of you, the heaviest one of all; if you play me false at last—but no—that is impossible! I will tell you what has happened and then explain what you have to do. I know you will do it: you *must* do it.

"Lassalle, in order to avenge himself upon me for your rejection of his suit, has intrigued against me in Munich so successfully that I am on the point of losing my position. The Government has sent a certain Dr. Haenle to investigate the matter, and it now depends upon you either to save me and your whole family, or to ruin us for ever.

I require of you, therefore, to summon up all your courage to meet this Dr. Haenle, who will probably be accompanied by Colonel Rüstow, and that you will declare to him that you have given up Lassalle, and above all, you will assure him that I have not forced you to this renunciation. For if you give them the least reason to suspect that you are acting under my control, then the whole family is lost! Do not forget this for a moment during the interview! I know you cannot have the heart to ruin us all! You are my good, noble daughter!"

Helene protested with many tears against such a demand. She said she could not do what he asked—it was too hard! But after much persuasion she became weak and cowardly, as on other occasions when her father's will was set against hers, and finally she promised to follow his instructions, hoping secretly that, whatever she might say, Lassalle would yet rescue her, even though she were standing before the altar with another, as he had told her on the Rigi he would do.

Her father then left her and sent for Dr. Haenle and Colonel Rüstow, as though to confer with them respecting Lassalle's demand. On their arrival he expressed his willingness to grant the desired interview before the notary, in case of his daughter consenting to the arrangement, and offered to send for her and ask whether she would allow the matter to be settled in that way. Both gentlemen objected to the proposition; but Herr von Dönniges insisted upon calling Helene, and she came.

According to the report which was carried back to Lassalle, she appeared entirely free and at ease, her manner being rather gay and scornful, than depressed. Colonel Rüstow addressed her with the seriousness

becoming to so important an occasion, and gave her Lassalle's reasons for desiring a conversation with her alone, or before some witness whose presence would not hinder a full and free explanation.

She declined to meet him, adding, "What good would it do? I know what he wants to say, and I am tired of the whole business!"

On being reminded that she had sworn to be true to him, she replied in a jesting tone, "Swore? Oh, I never swear!"

On being told that her remarks were in strong contrast with her conduct upon several occasions, especially with her having placed herself under Lassalle's protection at Pension Bovet, she answered carelessly, "Yes, it is true; but that was done under a momentary impulse."

At last Rüstow told her that she seemed to him to dread meeting Lassalle, lest her former feelings towards him should be revived.

She denied this, and said she objected to the interview merely because it was useless.

Dr. Haenle suggested that the conversation need not last the proposed two hours, for, in case of her retaining her present mood, Lassalle would certainly break off much sooner, whereupon she smiled and replied:

"Lassalle likes to talk; he would scarcely get through what he has to say in two hours!"

Rüstow represented to her that having done Lassalle a wrong she owed him satisfaction. She answered with a smile:

"To his vanity?"

And Rüstow replied gravely:

"No; I allude to his dignity as a man.

Dr. Haenle then interposed, assuring her that she ought to grant the interview and even demand it herself, because she had wronged Lassalle, and also because by this means she might be able to avert from herself and her family the unpleasant consequences which would be likely to follow the threatened publication of the whole story by Lassalle.

She acknowledged the justice of this argument, and said she would think the matter over and send her decision to Dr. Haenle in writing.

The two gentlemen then left the house and went to inform Lassalle of what had passed. Their account of the interview was doubtless correct, and they were justifiable in the conclusions they drew from Helene's conduct.

But her own statement places the affair in an entirely different light.

Having been coaxed and warned and threatened by her father concerning the part she was to play, she was soon afterwards summoned to the interview, and saw before her Colonel Rüstow and Dr. Haenle. She was astonished to recognize in Colonel Rüstow the gentleman to whom she had given the letter for Lassalle, and whom her father had represented to be a stranger, having no interest in the matter, and therefore entirely impartial. And yet he was Rüstow, Lassalle's friend—a false friend—whom her father claimed as agreeing with his own opinions. She looked at him, hoping to find an expression of sympathy in his eyes; but his gaze was that of an unsparing judge, and she concluded that it was useless to expect any help from him. That Lassalle's chosen friend should look at her in that way aroused her indignation, and the hatred which she had felt towards him ever since her discovery of his supposed treachery was strengthened into abhorrence by his manner at this second meeting.

Yielding to an impulse of unreasonable dislike she considered his questions impertinent and his gaze insulting, and accordingly made her replies as short and unsatisfactory as possible.

When, years afterwards, she read the published report of that interview, it was difficult for her to believe that she had ever uttered such heartless and silly remarks; but her nerves were so excited at the time that she had hard work to prevent a fit of hysterics. And no wonder! Forced into the presence of two strangers, one of whom she believed to be a traitor; bound by her promise to say the exact opposite of what she felt; watched every moment by her father, who stood near, with his stern eyes fixed upon her face;—it was a hard trial, especially as she was not supported by the consciousness of rectitude.

She was telling and acting a lie—always a difficult thing to do for a character which still retains a spark of sincerity; and that the basis of Helene's nature was truth is shown by her readiness to believe the lies of other people.

Towards Dr. Haenle she felt differently. She knew nothing about him, and although his way of questioning her was unpleasant, so that she wondered why he treated her as though she were a criminal, still her last hope rested upon him. He came from Lassalle, and him she still trusted. She felt like crying out to the stranger, "Save me! For God's sake save me!" But she dared not make such an appeal; and so she tried to express the torture of her soul in the glances which she gave him from time to time. In her excitement it seemed to her that he understood this mute language, that he must see how impossible it was for her to speak freely in her father's presence, and that he would contrive some way to talk to her alone; and so at the last she looked at him earnestly and said

she would reflect upon the matter, and send him her decision in writing, thinking that he would at once perceive her desire to say something to him in private. She had already arranged her plan. She would write and tell him that she would visit him. Yanko should carry the note, and at the appointed time escort her to the interview.

Yanko consented to the proposal, and even approved of it, saying that she and Lassalle had been treated shamefully, and Helene, full of hope, retired to her room to write the letter which was to save herself and Lassalle.

Notwithstanding Helene's reasonable and apparently sincere explanation of her conduct during that decisive interview, many readers will probably refuse to accept her statements, being unable to understand how a grown-up girl could be so foolishly afraid of her father, especially in the presence of two acknowledged friends of her lover, ready and even eager to help and defend her.

But there are (alas! many) readers who, having themselves suffered from parental or other tyranny, can appreciate Helene's situation. Her father's habitual severity towards his children is described as excessive, even in cases of petty disobedience, and in this aggravated instance she was intimidated by the memory of past abuse and cruelty, in addition to present threats and warnings expressed in his watchful and steady gaze.

We have already seen how Helene was induced by her father to tell and write and act many a hateful and hated lie, and the habit of obedience to his commands, even when these conflicted with her own wishes and interests, was of too long standing to be broken up at so bewildering a crisis. Harriet Martineau, one of the bravest and most thoroughly sincere beings that ever lived, confesses in her autobiography that in her childhood and

youth she habitually told lies to her mother, although scrupulously truthful towards everybody else, and it was because she was afraid of her mother, who was unduly severe in the discipline of her children in general, and of this one in particular. If so strong and fearless a character could be so far influenced for evil by the authority of force, what could be expected of so light and vacillating a disposition as Helene displayed in every action of her life?

The wrongs of childhood are little heeded, and seldom redressed; but they are so frequent in occurrence, and so fatal in effect—not only as regards the affections of children, but also concerning their whole development, physical, intellectual, and moral—as to awaken in thoughtful minds the earnest inquiry whether, on the principle of “the greatest good to the greatest number,” it were not wiser to make the State, instead of the parent, the guardian of the person and interests of the child.

But this is not the place for a thorough consideration of so important a subject.

Here, certainly, is an instance of the ruin of a life, and of more lives than one, through the abuse of family ties, through the desecration of the unwritten laws which are supposed to hallow the privacy of the domestic circle.

In the meantime Dr. Haenle and Colonel Rüstow returned to the hotel to acquaint Lassalle with the result of the meeting. The impression made upon them both by Helene was the same. They were angry and disgusted at her conduct, her coquettish attire, her heartless manner; her trivial speech had given them the worst opinion of her disposition and her motives, and they described the scene without reserve to Lassalle.

His distress was fearful to behold! He ran up and down the room in savage anger, and tore his hair with both hands, uttering exclamations of horror and shame and rage that any one should dare to insult and deceive and deride him in such a manner. He swore that his injuries should not go unpunished; his whole soul was set upon revenge. His anger was directed chiefly against the Von Dönniges family, and he ceased to reproach the Countess for her unwise and treacherous conduct, which had really done much to produce the catastrophe.

As soon as the first paroxysm of fury had spent itself, Lassalle telegraphed to all the absent friends who had interested themselves in his behalf to refrain from any further action in the matter. His despatch to Richard Wagner was as follows:—

“I have given up the affair on account of the utter unworthiness of the person. Best thanks for kind intentions. Do nothing more. Lassalle.”

Dr. Haenle, seeing that Lassalle was fully determined to make no further efforts towards reconciliation, considered his own mission as accomplished, and left Geneva the same evening, after sending a note to Herr von Dönniges informing him that the report of the recent conversation with his daughter had made an impression upon Lassalle which rendered both the promised letter of the young lady and the proposed interview before a notary superfluous, and therefore there was no longer any need of his own presence in Geneva.

Lassalle's next step was to send a challenge to Herr von Dönniges in the following words:—

"HERR VON DÖNNIGES,

"Having learned through the report of Colonel Rüstow and Dr. Haenle that your daughter is a shameless hussy, and having therefore no intention of dishonouring myself by marrying her, there is no longer any reason for withholding a demand for satisfaction on account of the various insults which you have offered me. I therefore request you to make the necessary arrangements for a duel, with my two friends by whom I send this message.

"F. LASSALLE."

He wrote also to Racowitza as follows :—

"HERR VON RACOWITZA,

"As you have been informed by Colonel Rüstow concerning the relations existing between myself and Fräulein Helene von Dönniges, you are probably surprised that I have not yet called you to account for your acceptance of the peculiar rôle assigned you with regard to that young lady. By way of explanation I enclose a copy of a letter which I have felt obliged to send to Herr von Dönniges, from which you will perceive that you no longer have a rival in me, and that I willingly resign to you a happiness for which, since the occurrences of this day, I have no desire.

"With sincere commiseration,

"F. LASSALLE."

Helene's letter to Dr. Haenle being finished, she was just writing the address when Yanko, looking pale and serious, entered the room and said :

"There is no use in sending the letter. Dr. Haenle is on his way to Munich."

"Gone away?" she cried. "He was to stay three days longer!"

"Lassalle has just challenged your father!" was the reply.

She was in despair. Lassalle, who condemned duelling, upon whose strong will and good sense she had placed her dependence for a final rescue—he had challenged her father!

Helene's astonishment was just. Lassalle had always been opposed in principle to duelling, and had twice refused to accept a challenge, at the risk of all that such a refusal implies. One of the challenges was in consequence of his success in a certain sentimental intrigue in Berlin, and after his refusal to fight, his rival, with a party of friends, fell upon him with sticks as he was walking in the Thiergarten. He defended himself with bravery and skill, and in memory of that adventure he was presented by his friend, the historian Förster, with a cane which once belonged to Robespierre, and which Lassalle carried constantly from that time.

The other challenge came from Julian Schmidt, in consequence of a political pamphlet written by Lassalle, and was declined like the first. These two representatives of opposing ideas had never seen each other, and a short time after the difficulty they met at a hotel in Switzerland and enjoyed a long and sympathetic conversation, without being aware of each other's identity. On making separate inquiries afterwards they discovered the embarrassing truth, and Lassalle started off in one direction, while Schmidt and his wife took another, so as to avoid a second meeting.

And now, at the very time when Lassalle needed all the strength which principle and habit could afford, to sustain him against the insults and intrigues of his enemies, he failed utterly, and challenged his opponent in the rudest manner.

His excuse is to be found in his mental excitement and his physical weakness. He was an invalid when the trouble began. For nearly a month he had been harassed by anxiety and doubt. He arrived in Geneva fatigued with the rapid journey, and was forced to enter immediately upon the final struggle, which was rendered desperate by a conviction of Helene's treachery. He had scarcely slept at all for many nights and days, and from the moment of his reception of Dr. Haenle's report he was, to all intents and purposes, insane.

If only some kind friend had had the wit to administer, by stealth or by force, a powerful opiate or anæsthetic, so that his exhausted nature could have been refreshed by a period of unconsciousness of suffering and forgetfulness of wrong!

The day after sending the letters quoted above Lassalle made his will.

He bequeathed an annuity of twelve hundred thalers to Countess Hatzfeld; one of eight hundred thalers to Colonel Rüstow; of five hundred to Lothar Bucher; and of two hundred to Herr Alexi; five hundred thalers yearly for five years to the Secretary of the Working Men's Society in Berlin, to be used for the benefit of the association; also an annuity of one hundred and fifty thalers to the Secretary, Herr Willms, as a mark of esteem for his character. A legacy of one hundred napoleons was bequeathed to George Herwegh. The rest of his property in money was left to his mother. A part of his library was divided between several friends; the remaining books were to be sold at auction. His weapons were given to Herr von Hofstetten. A marble statue of Minerva was left to Herr Holthoff; an Apollo to Hans von Bülow; a Satyr

to Lothar Bucher ; and a number of alabaster figures to the Countess. The Working Men's Society was advised to choose Bernhard Becker as President. Lassalle's letters and papers were left to the Countess, with instructions to deliver all his literary manuscripts to Lothar Bucher, whose property they were to become. His silver plate was to be divided between his mother and Countess Hatzfeld, his furniture to be sold at auction. The will was written and signed in due form, August 27.

This necessary business being disposed of, Lassalle began his preparations for the duel. He asked Colonel Becker and Colonel Rüstow to be his seconds ; but Becker declined, and General Bethlem accepted the position. Lassalle requested Rüstow not to inform the Countess of what was going on, but Rüstow would not promise to keep silence, so it is probable that she knew all the particulars.

Instead of the expected acceptance of the challenge by Herr von Dönniges, a reply came from Herr von Racowitza, as his substitute. Rüstow at once declared that Lassalle was not called upon to notice a challenge from Racowitza until after he had obtained satisfaction from Herr von Dönniges ; but Lassalle insisted upon carrying out the programme, and Rüstow was obliged to submit.

At an hour appointed Count Kayserling and Dr. Arndt (the seconds of the other party) arrived to consult with Colonel Rüstow, who objected to Racowitza as the substitute of the person challenged ; but he was informed that Herr von Dönniges had fled to Berne, and had confided the defence of the family honour to his future son-in-law. The two seconds of Racowitza wished to have the duel take place the same evening, but Rüstow declared that

he could not secure another second so soon, and the matter was left unsettled. After the gentlemen had left, Rüstow tried to persuade Lassalle to postpone the duel; but he became furious, and insisted that it should take place the next morning at seven o'clock, and arrangements were made accordingly by both parties. The seconds met twice to discuss the possibility of a reconciliation; but Herr von Dönniges demanded that Lassalle should return Helene's letters, and also make an apology, to which demand Lassalle's friends of course would not agree, and so the meeting was decided upon. Rüstow urged Lassalle to practise at a mark during the interval; but Lassalle, who was noted for his skill in the use of fire-arms, scorned the suggestion as "nonsense."

Racowitza, it was said, practised diligently, firing one hundred and fifty shots in the public shooting-gallery the afternoon before the duel.

Rüstow remained with Lassalle till midnight, and then both retired to rest. At three in the morning Rüstow went to the locksmith's for a pistol which had needed repairing. When he entered Lassalle's room at five he found him sleeping quietly, but he awoke and rose at once. The first object that he noticed was the pistol; he caught it up, and throwing his arms around Rüstow's neck, he exclaimed:

"Ah! there I have exactly what I need!"

A little later Rüstow brought the second pistol from the smith, and then Lassalle, with his two seconds and his friend Hofstetten, drove out to Carrouge, the appointed place of encounter. They arrived before the other party, and Lassalle, who was not in the least excited, drank a cup of tea while waiting.

Soon the others arrived, bringing with them a surgeon. The preliminaries being arranged the combatants took

their places, and the signal was given. Racowitza fired first, and his shot hit Lassalle, who fired in reply, but without effect. Seeing that he was wounded the surgeon applied bandages, and he was conveyed to the carriage, which drove slowly back to Geneva, while Racowitza and his friends returned home in advance of the other party.

Helene says in her memoirs, that soon after the news of Lassalle's challenge had plunged her into despair Yanko came to her and bade her not to be anxious, as her father was about to start for Berne. She passed a dreadful night, and rose the next morning full of anxiety and fear. She met her mother, who regarded her with looks of hatred, and cursed her as the sole cause of all their misfortunes; but she could learn nothing of what was going on until towards evening, when Yanko came to her room to take leave of her. On her asking what he meant he told her that her father had shown him the challenge, saying that he himself was an elderly man, the father of a family, and therefore could not afford to risk his life in a duel; and yet, if he refused, how could such a stain upon the honour of the family be endured? Her mother had spoken to the same purpose, only still more distinctly, and he saw that he was expected to offer his services, which he had done. He had never fired a pistol in his life, as his delicate health forbade hunting and all similar sports; but he had been practising that afternoon, and thought he could manage to perform his part. There was nothing else to be done. Helene's brothers were too young to take their father's place, and the laws of chivalry demanded that the challenge should be accepted.

Helene listened with shame and rage on account of the cruelty and cowardice of her parents. Their plan seemed

to her diabolical : to expose that sickly youth to a danger which he had not himself incurred, and for which he was totally unprepared !

But her second thought was that Lassalle would of course kill Yanko, and then her way to her lover would be open. She did not even feel pity for Yanko ; she felt that his death was necessary to secure her happiness. Afterwards she recalled those heartless reflections with horror ; but at the moment the only question with her was, "How can I come soonest to Lassalle?" Yanko's constant submission to her wishes and opinions had taught her to consider him as her property to do with as she might choose, and he now seemed only the means by which she might be able to fulfil her long cherished and only partially suppressed desire. She thought to herself, "When Yanko is dead, and they bring him back to the house, there will be great confusion, and nobody will remember to keep watch of me ; then I can slip out of the house and run to Lassalle, and stay with him all the rest of my life !"

Yanko spent the night in writing to his parents and friends, while Helene made secret preparations for her intended flight. She burned all her letters, packed her jewels and a change of underclothing in a handbag, and in the morning put on two dresses, so as to be provided for several days. She heard that her father had returned, but she did not see him ; and when Yanko came to her, before going away on his perilous errand, she bade him farewell with no stronger emotion than a sorrowful pity for his certain fate.

After he had left her, she remained alone in her room, thinking over and over :

"If the carriage which brings Yanko back comes along very slowly I shall know that he is severely wounded ; but if it stops a little way from the house, and someone gets out to prepare us for the worst, then I shall know that he is dead. In either case I must seize the first chance to run away. I must hurry downstairs while the tumult is at its height, and disappear before they miss me."

Several hours passed by. Helene was kneeling before the open fireplace, burning a last package of worthless papers, when she heard a carriage, driven at full speed, stop before the house. She thought it must be some person come to see her father on business, when suddenly the door was thrown open, and Yanko, unharmed, stood before her.

She thought, "So the duel did not take place after all, and everything remains as it was !"

He went up to her, took her hand, and kissing it, said, "Are you glad that I am still alive?"

"Oh yes, certainly," she answered mechanically ; and he continued :

"But what will you do when I tell you that Lassalle is wounded?"

She burst out laughing, almost without knowing it, and replied, "I would not believe it !"

Deeply mortified, as well by her implicit reliance upon Lassalle as by her scorn of his own prowess, he answered, "It is so. I have wounded him, without wishing to do it, and I hope only slightly."

"*You* have wounded *him* !" she said mockingly ; "it must indeed be only a slight wound !" And then she bade him go away and leave her alone.

Lassalle's wound was fatal. He was shot through the vitals in a manner which made death not only certain, but preferable to a maimed existence.

He complained of great suffering as soon as the carriage entered upon the paved streets of the city, but to the astonishment of his friends he mounted the stairs of his hotel without help. On arriving at his room, however, his strength gave way, and he was laid upon the bed from which he was never to rise. A physician was immediately called in, and two celebrated surgeons from Heidelberg and Zürich were summoned by telegraph. All three doctors were of the same opinion as to the hopelessness of the case.

The next day Lassalle insisted upon seeing a lawyer respecting his will, and after the document had been pronounced without flaw, Lassalle sealed and addressed the paper himself. After that he spoke no more, excepting once, when he sprang up in bed and called for water to quench the thirst caused by his fearful agony.

His pain, which would otherwise have been unbearable, was partially stilled by opium, which was given in such large quantities that he lay in a stupor until his death, which took place on the third day after the duel.

He died at seven o'clock on the morning of August 31, 1864, at the age of thirty-nine years and five months.

The news of his death spread like wildfire through Geneva and was telegraphed in every direction, causing dismay to his friends and a shock, which was not all joy, to his enemies.

The Von Dönniges household were soon apprised of the fatal result, as they had been of all the particulars of the victim's agony. During those days of suspense Helene often overheard whispers about "extreme pain," "opium."

&c., but the voices were hushed as she approached and she was left to her stupor of melancholy, wherein she was conscious of only one feeling—that of deep and increasing hatred of her parents, who had provoked the duel and were therefore responsible for the consequences.

On the third day, at ten o'clock in the morning, Yanko came to her room and asked her to go into the garden with him, as he wished to tell her something. She followed him without hesitation. He led her to a seat and took his place beside her in silence. She waited for him to speak; he said nothing, and at last she lifted her eyes to his face and was startled to see how pale he was.

"Well?" she said.

And he answered, "Lassalle is dead!"

At first she did not believe him; then, after he had told her all, she pushed him from her and cried:

"Go away! Now I hate you as I do the others!"

And then all was still within her, as still as though she too were dead!

It was months before she recovered in some degree from the shock, and she never recovered from it entirely.

She was carried away the same day from Geneva, whither she did not know and did not care.

As soon as Lassalle's death was known in Geneva, a committee of Republicans from various countries was formed to organize an imposing funeral ceremony, which was held in the "Temple Unique," September 2, and attended by more than four thousand persons.

Countess Hatzfeld, who had watched by Lassalle's bed of pain until the end, had his body embalmed, and then started with the remains for Berlin, intending to stop on the way at all the towns wherein Lassalle had founded societies, and arouse excitement through obsequies similar

to those which had taken place in Geneva. A magnificent reception, in which the Catholic clergy took active part, awaited the corpse of the celebrated Agitator at Mayence; but further demonstrations were checked by the police. The Lassalle family had appealed to the Prussian authorities, and on the arrival of the Rhine steamer at Cologne two police officers took possession of the coffin in the name of the Government and sent it immediately to Breslau, where it was received by Lassalle's nearest relatives and buried in their family vault in the Jewish cemetery.

Countess Hatzfeld, moved by hatred of the Lassalle family (who doubtless cherished the same feeling towards her), protested against this step, declaring that Lassalle died a Catholic, and therefore ought not to be interred among Jews; but she could not prove her statement, and the Catholic priests to whom she appealed were too wise to compromise themselves by trying to continue the discussion.

Lassalle's body was left undisturbed, and a memorial tablet was erected above his grave bearing the inscription :

"HERE RESTS WHAT WAS MORTAL.
OF FERDINAND LASSALLE,
THINKER AND CHAMPION."

AFTERWARDS

THE excitement caused by the death of Lassalle was deep and widespread and long-continued; and the scandal which the Von Dönniges family had tried by such unjust means to prevent, and which had really been created by their own conduct, was let loose in all its details.

Herr von Dönniges was removed from his diplomatic position, and thus the lie which he had made his chief argument in the subduing of his daughter's will was turned into truth for his own well-deserved punishment.

Helene's marriage with Lassalle would not have made any great commotion in society, nor disturbed in the least her father's professional career, and he must have known that there was no real danger for himself or his family in allowing her to follow her inclinations. But the obstinacy of a pedagogue and the vanity of a courtier combined to urge him on to his own ruin. His intimate relations with King Maximilian, and the honours heaped upon him in consequence of royal partiality, had rendered him so proud that he could not bear the idea of his daughter's alliance with a man of the people, and that man a Jew, and a hater of kings.

He made up his mind that it should not be, and he was determined that his will should be obeyed, even though

misery and bloodshed should be the consequence. Perhaps his conduct appeared to him in its true light when, a few years later, he lay dying of the small-pox at Rome. There was a grim irony in the fate which condemned the fastidious aristocrat to perish by a loathsome disease which is born of poverty and filth, and which he would have considered as fit to ravage only in the squalid huts of the lowest ranks of the common people whom he so despised.

Countess Hatzfeld, on her return to Berlin, began to make arrangements for a publication of the tragical story, and several of Lassalle's friends and fellow-labourers assisted in collecting the necessary documents.

The Countess appointed Lothar Bucher to the task of writing the account; but after reading his introductory chapter she decided to employ some other person, and invited Karl Marx, of London, to accept the undertaking. He had no time to spare, however, and she applied next to Bernhard Becker, Lassalle's successor as President of the Working Men's Society, who consented.

All went well for awhile, but as soon as the Countess perceived that Becker was determined to write the pamphlet without consulting her wishes, and that he would be likely to tell the whole truth, regardless of how it might affect her reputation, she decided to take the work away from so independent a person and give it to Wilhelm Liebknecht, who was at the time greatly under her influence. Accordingly she requested the return of the documents, under the pretence that she wished to add several letters to them. Becker having been in expectation of such a message had taken the precaution to copy all the papers, so that he was ready to obey the summons without delay. Liebknecht wrote, under the direction of the Countess, fourteen

sheets full of her praises, and then the enterprise fell through on account of a quarrel between the pair.

The publisher, tired of waiting for the rest of the promised manuscript and for his pay, added a short description of the funeral ceremonies, and threatened to issue the pamphlet as complete. Whereupon Countess Hatzfeld paid him damages and bought the entire edition, which was never published, but kept by her as a private treasure to be shared with only a few sympathising friends.

The pamphlet was entitled :

“Ferdinand Lassalle. An account of his last days, taken from authentic documents by eye-witnesses and friends. Berlin, 1865. 8vo. Published by Reinhold Schlingmann.”

Bernhard Becker, being in possession of the necessary material, and not having been forbidden by the Countess to write anything upon the subject, printed the account which he had partly prepared at her request, and published the book in 1868. The Countess immediately caused the work to be confiscated upon the charge of a publication of private papers without the permission of the owner. But it was soon set free and was widely circulated until, upon the fusion of the two branches of the Social Democratic party (one of which concurred with Becker's statements while the other differed from them), the book was withdrawn from public sale.

Countess Hatzfeld was justly considered as having been instrumental in bringing on the catastrophe which culminated in Lassalle's untimely death, and after that fatal event her influence declined. Some time before her death she sought and obtained a reconciliation with her

husband ; thus putting herself in the wrong respecting the separation, and stamping as Quixotic the chivalrous efforts of Lassalle in her behalf.

Helene was taken away from Geneva immediately after the catastrophe, and Racowitza accompanied the party, to judge from a hasty letter written by Countess Hatzfeld to Hans von Bülow, wherein she begs him to lose no time in causing the arrest of the "murderer" and "murderess," who had been traced to Munich, where they were staying at the Bavarian Hotel, Racowitza being known under the name of Yanko.

The arrest was not made, however, and the next that was publicly known of the doings of the fugitives was the announcement of their marriage, a little more than half a year after Lassalle's death.

This step was considered an insult to Lassalle's memory and a new proof of Helene's heartlessness ; but her explanation gives a different aspect to the event. Yanko had for years been her devoted lover and her sincere, unselfish friend. Her conduct with regard to Lassalle had caused him great unhappiness, and it was through her fault, and that of her family, that his life had been embittered by remorse. Always delicate in health, the excitement attending the duel made him seriously ill, and after that acute attack he never knew a well day.

Helene saw that he was dying of a decline, and hoping to cheer by tender and sympathizing care his short remaining span she married him, and accompanied him to his home in Wallachia. Five months later, while they were on a journey, he died, and was buried in Nice.

Yanko von Racowitza appears to have been a man, or rather boy, of only ordinary intellect, but of extraordinarily

good heart. He was a year younger than Helene ; only twenty years old when he was sent to fight Lassalle, and less than twenty-two when he died. He was sickly and insignificant ; his studies were scarcely finished ; he had no fortune, nor position, nor prospect of future success. But he was amiable, and possessed of some pleasant accomplishments, and his conduct towards Helene was always generous and sincere.

His refusal to accede to Rüstow's proposal for an interview between Lassalle and Helene was probably dictated by Herr von Dönniges, together with the sarcastic reflections upon Helene's conduct towards both of her lovers ; for Racowitza promised Helene repeatedly to take her himself to Lassalle as soon as the first excitement of the difficulty should have subsided.

It was asserted by certain of Lassalle's friends that Racowitza's deadly aim was prompted by malice, and with the intention of rendering Lassalle harmless as a rival, if not of absolutely killing him.

But that cruel shot was more probably the result of awkwardness—the nervous, trembling aim of an excited novice who until the day before had never handled a pistol.

Racowitza told Helene immediately after the transaction, and before the danger was known, that he did not wish to hit Lassalle, and was in hopes that the wound would prove a slight one. His conduct throughout was in keeping with this declaration, and his early death was doubtless caused by remorse for the deed to which he had been urged by other persons.

When Racowitza died, Helene felt that she was alone in the world ; for the breach between herself and her parents could never be healed. She hated them with increasing

bitterness the more she reflected upon the past, and they regarded her as the sole cause of their trouble and disgrace.

She lived for a time in Berlin, where gossip was busy with her name. She had no society of her own sex, and was always seen alone or in the company of men. Occasionally she appeared at grand festivities in the opera house, or other public places, where her beauty awakened universal admiration ; while the remembrance of her history caused instinctive avoidance and a recoil of horror on the part of her temporary neighbours. Robed in white, her clear-cut features and dazzling throat nearly as pale as her dress, and with no colour about her excepting her glorious crown of red-gold hair, she passed along like a living statue or a haunted spirit, while the whisper followed, "That is Madame Lassalle!" For so intimately was her identity associated with that of her celebrated lover, that although everybody knew she did not marry him and was the cause of his early death, still, in the speech of the people, she bore his name.

Being obliged to earn her living in some way, and having always felt a strong attraction towards the stage, Helene studied under the well-known actor Friedmann, and after a time married him and shared his professional career in Schwerin and Vienna for several years. She was not particularly successful as an actress ; but her beauty, and the notoriety attached to her, made her an object of curiosity, and drew a crowded house whenever she played.

She was often threatened by Lassalle's friends, and several times found it necessary to explain her past conduct before they would allow her to appear. The feeling against her was exceedingly bitter, especially as it was believed by many that the tragedy was the result of

a deep-laid plot on the part of Lassalle's enemies to get him out of the way, and that Helene was a willing instrument in their hands to lure him on to his destruction.

One of the prominent Republicans, who saw Helene for the first time when she was upon the stage in masculine attire, was astonished and deeply moved by her wonderful resemblance to Lassalle. He said it was as though his dead friend were living and moving before him !

Helene's companions on the Rigi were so much struck by the resemblance between Lassalle and herself that they inquired whether they were near relations. And the same curious fact was noticed once by an artist in Berlin, who was employed to reproduce Helene's features (from a photograph) in fresco upon the wall of Lassalle's library. He told Lassalle that Helene's face was anatomically exactly like his own, and Lassalle was happy in that knowledge, and imparted it to Helene long afterwards in the memorable days at Wabern.

It was during the period of her life as an actress that Helene discovered the truth with regard to Lassalle's conduct after their separation. One can imagine her grief and remorse on reading Bernhard Becker's circumstantial account of the affair, and seeing how her own behaviour must have appeared to those who were ignorant of the persecution to which she was subjected in the privacy of her home. Doubtless her despair had much to do with the restlessness and recklessness of several ensuing years. Her union with Friedmann was soon dissolved by mutual consent, and according to general report she afterwards lived an adventurous life in various places, finding her way at last to St. Petersburg, where she decided to settle. She had then received her share of her father's property, and was able to maintain herself

with comfort and some degree of elegance. Her house was a resort for many members of the Liberal party in politics, and she formed an enduring connection with one of the members, Baron von Schewitsch, who had formerly held a high position at Court and in the State service. Having fallen under suspicion, in consequence of his sympathy with the revolutionary movement in Russia, he decided to leave the country, and Helene accompanied him as his wife. They went first to Paris, where they remained six months, and then sailed for New York.

Having lost their property by fleeing from Russia they were obliged to devise some means for future support, and accordingly they organized a theatrical company, of which Herr von Schewitsch was manager and Helene the principal actress. The company made the tour of the United States with varying success. Helene was very popular in St. Louis and San Francisco; but her play was too refined to suit the dramatic taste of the common public, and she soon decided to leave the stage and devote herself to literary work. Her husband became a contributor to several prominent journals in New York, especially the *World*, and after a time he assumed the position of Chief Editor of the newly-established *Volks Zeitung*; while Helene undertook the daily criticism of two theatres—the “Thalia” in the Bowery and the “Germania” in the upper part of the city, the latter being frequented chiefly by the upper classes and devoted principally to German comedy. Herr von Schewitsch became also Editor of *Figaro*, and his wife assisted him upon both papers.

She wrote stories, sketches, and incidents of travel, and also published a novel, entitled *Gräfin Vera*. Her most interesting work, however, is the story of her

connection with Lassalle : *Meine Beziehungen zu Ferdinand Lassalle. Helene von Racowitza.*

The woman who could write such a book is not the silly coquette, the heartless devotee of fashion, the unprincipled adventuress whom the world has agreed to see in Helene ; but a being of warm heart and superior intellect, worthy of Lassalle's devotion, and capable, if she had been left to herself, of becoming a co-worker with him in the arduous life which he had chosen.

No stronger argument for the emancipation of woman, no fuller excuse for the faults and weaknesses of the gentler sex, could be presented than Helene's melancholy experience affords.

To a German acquaintance, who visited her in 1882 at her home in New York, she said, in reference to the past, that the fearful tragedy in Geneva had *spoiled her life*. For a long time afterwards she despised the whole world—herself most of all—and found her only resource against despair in total indifference.

Now and then a professional success or the excitement of a gay hour would awaken something like a gleam of pleasure in her still youthful nature ; but the feeling was transient, and the gloom soon settled down again. She had really loved only one man in her whole life—*Lassalle*.

He was her ideal. Others had destroyed him ; but the blame was laid upon her. That she had in some degree recovered her serenity was owing to her happy relations with her present husband. She had also learned the value of useful work as a means of content. Her book on Lassalle was written because she wished to defend her reputation for the sake of the husband she respected. She waited fifteen years until the principal

reasons for delay were no longer in force, and her true account of the secret history of that time of trouble had greatly changed public opinion respecting her character.

There are tragedies happening every day which wreck individual happiness as completely as did the powerful array of circumstances that culminated in Lassalle's untimely death, but it is seldom that so many elements combine to make the result a matter of general sympathy and world-wide interest.

Some lives seem to be singled out and lifted above the mass of other lives in order that they may serve as lights to mark the safe channel, or as beacons to warn of danger. It is well to heed such guides, and while we are welcomed by the uplifted torch at the harbour's gate, or cheered by the steady flame from some lonely tower upon a rock-bound coast, we must not cease to listen to the mournful tolling of the wave-swept bells upon a hidden reef.

Lassalle's history teaches above all other things the doctrine of NECESSITY, the inevitable and thorough working of Cause and Effect in the experience of every human being.

This great truth is only just beginning to dawn upon mankind, and it is still obscured by clouds of superstition in the minds of most men. It is for future generations to enjoy the fruition of the principles, which are now being sown in tears and harrowed under by the sharp discipline of disappointment and remorse.

Lassalle's tragical end, although caused indirectly by outward persecution, was the direct result of his disposition and habits. And yet he was not a bad man. His hasty

temper, his overweening pride, his silly vanity, were faults likely to be corrected by time and experience—they were the early ferment of the energy, and self-confidence, and courage which are indispensable qualities in a leader of men. Even in his career of gallantry he was more considerate and more honourable than most young men of the time. He never led innocence astray; he never deceived the companions of his pleasures by any promises of marriage or of exclusive devotion; and there is reason to believe that a union with the woman he loved would have fixed his wandering affections for his whole after-life.

And yet his habitual yielding to anger and pride and desire were punished in the loss of all that made life valuable, and finally of life itself.

If he had learned self-control in his youth, and practised it in his maturer years, he would not have been overcome by the insults of his enemies; if he had guided his course by principles of strict morality, Herr von Dönniges would not have had a plausible ground of objection in the connection with Countess Hatzfeld, and Helene's confidence in her lover's honour would not have been so easily shaken. Finally, if his interest in the cause of the working-man had been entirely free from political ambition and selfish vanity, he would have held his life as a trust too dear to be thrown away in a mad struggle for a fickle woman's love.

But he had set all these unworthy springs of action to work in his character, and their cumulative force at a decisive point determined the catastrophe.

The same process is to be traced in the conduct of Herr von Dönniges. He was in reality a much more respectable personage than would appear in this eventful episode. His career as teacher, professor in the University of Berlin,

tutor to the Crown Prince of Bavaria, friend and counsellor of the King, statesman and ambassador, was honourable to himself and useful to the public. But in his devotion to his Sovereign he overlooked the claims of his own family. He neglected his children, and so when the happiness of his daughter threatened to interfere with his own ambitious plans he sacrificed her without hesitation. His manœuvres in her regard show that he was a skilful diplomatist, and it is a pity that, owing to the insignificance of Bavaria in the political world, he was denied a sufficient field for the display of his powers, and was therefore obliged to open war upon his domestic hearth, and exercise his talent for strategy in the separation and ruin of two young lives. Socially he was noted for his caustic wit, and the sardonic element of his character must have enjoyed keen gratification as he experimented upon Helene's fickle nature, and watched friends and enemies, shrewd men of the world and sharp lawyers, fall one after the other into the trap of lies which his hypocrisy had set. He could not deceive Lassalle; but he wrought his destruction through the credulity of others.

His manipulation of his daughter's will proved his familiarity with an important psychological law, which is little known to honest people in general, but which sharpers and thimble-riggers and confidence-men of all sorts have studied to their advantage. It is that law by which the human mind, when once fairly started upon a train of thought, pursues the same direction unless, or until, some opposing influence acquires superior force and breaks the connection of ideas. If the desired current can be kept up the operator's success is certain.

The victims of confidence games are not always, nor usually, ignorant and inexperienced persons; they are

often men familiar with every form of wickedness to be found in large cities ; their clothing is impervious to pick-pockets, and they know how to defend themselves against midnight attack. But some day they meet a wily gamester whose tactics offer a new theme for reflection, and they think and ponder, and their independent judgment bends to the adroit will which is working upon them, and they are robbed.

In the same way Herr von Dönniges played upon the two strings of Lassalle's alleged unworthiness and his own threatened ruin until he had charmed Helene's choice into unison with his dishonourable plans. His triumph was short and his punishment did not tarry ; but for the moment the victory was complete, thus illustrating another phase of the all-compelling law of Cause and Effect.

It is significant in this connection to note that of all the chief actors in the Lassalle tragedy only Herr von Dönniges and Countess Hatzfeld professed to be guided in their lives by religious beliefs and principles (he was a Protestant and she was a Catholic), and they were the only ones who acted dishonestly and treacherously in the affair.

And Helene—— What experience could prove more plainly than her own the certain penalty of injustice and falsehood, even of indecision and weak concession to improper demands. She had prepared her fate by a long course of self-indulgence and feeble dependence ; she had wasted her own emotions and trifled with the feelings of others until she could no longer discern the falsehood of the father who was leading her astray, nor recognize the fidelity of the lover who was trying to save her. She was more to be pitied than blamed for her terrible mis-

take. But retribution follows the fact rather than the motive, and Helene received her full punishment in the knowledge that Lassalle hated her at last, and that but for her folly he need not have died.

Her gay and fickle temperament, indicated by the "red-gold" hair which was so beautiful in Lassalle's eyes, preserved her from realizing the full extent of the misfortune she had caused; otherwise she could hardly have borne to outlive her murdered lover, or, living, have found comfort in the affection of another man.

But it is not for one soul to measure the capacity of another soul for joy or sorrow. Helene's youth was shadowed by bitter memories, and her recent declaration that she had found hope and courage in useful work is an admission that regret for the past must be for her a life-long burden.

Let her see to it that these years of developed activity are filled with words of wisdom and deeds of kindness, so that when old age demands release from labour, and memory resumes its sway, the cheering whispers of a reconciled conscience may prevail over the haunting echo of her own scornful laughter and Lassalle's despairing cry.

Who was to blame for the tragedy?

Nobody, or rather, Everybody. Not one of the chief actors would have filled his or her part if the end could have been perceived and later reflections anticipated; not one could hinder the sudden sway of impulse, guided by the united forces of inherent disposition, inculcated motive, and practical example.

And the remote causes—causes none the less—must be taken into consideration.

Frau von Dönniges, launching her daughter at twelve years of age upon a career of coquetry—Helene vain and vacillating, using her beauty as a lure for the temptation and enthrallment of men—were developed naturally from the system which from time immemorial has made woman the drudge and plaything of man. Lassalle's faults were principally due to the superstitious hatred which Christians from the beginning until now have cherished against the Jews. Herr von Dönniges was dominated by that anachronistic reverence for kings which involves the perpetuation of class distinctions and, consequently, of poverty.

When woman is allowed an opportunity to develop her nature harmoniously ; when "Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics" have an equal share with Christians in the rights and privileges of a civilization which all have helped to create ; when human beings call no man lord, but dwell as brethren together ;—then such tragedies as this one, and many another less known to the world, will be impossible.

That happy time is far distant ; but it will come, and each of us can do something to hasten its approach by striving to cure evil through removal of causes, rather than through palliation of effects.

What was weak and faulty in Lassalle's character was consumed in his cruel sacrifice. The good that he accomplished lives after him and will never die.

His enemies even more than his friends have reason to lament his early death ; for he, more than any other man who has since come to the front, would have been able to guide and to restrain the restless elements which are threatening every form of social law and order.

Lassalle, if he had lived, would have done much to prevent the development of anarchism. He would have

scorned to destroy thrones by murdering their temporary occupants ; he would have striven to reconcile Capital and Labour through mutual concession and gradual amelioration of long-standing evils, rather than by means of the dangerous, and in the end disastrous, experiment of a "strike." If he had been spared to witness and take part in the war which he foretold, his own patriotism would have been strengthened, and he would have convinced his followers that the unity of Germany is another and a strong guarantee of the final triumph of justice for the individual, as well as for the nation and the race.

What he would have wished to do may perhaps after all be accomplished through the veneration with which his party still cherishes his memory, and which tends more and more to make him the ideal of a political cult. Already there are many ignorant working-men who do not believe that he is dead, but trust to his reappearing at some great crisis to assume the control of events, and extend his powerful protection over the poor and the oppressed. Even the better-informed among his followers ascribe the origin of many fundamental principles of democracy to Lassalle alone. His name is heard and his writings are quoted whenever the people come together to discuss their rights and complain of their wrongs ; and in hours of social enjoyment working-men sing in full accord the song which recalls the aims and efforts of their departed leader :

"A churchyard in Breslau,
And there in his grave,
Now slumbers the hero
Who swords to us gave."

"In Breslau ein Kirchhof,
Ein Todter im Grab,
Dort schlummert der Eine
Der Schwerter uns gab."

In view of Lassalle's mournful ruin and early death it is a consolation to be able to believe that his brilliant personality will continue to shine as a star, pointing towards the liberty which he hoped to see attained, and which his life-work brought nearer to his fellow-men.

THE END

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